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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Don slaps 100% tariff on non-US made films

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Trump imposes 100 per cent tariff on movies made outside US

New York, 29 Sept

US President Donald Trump on Monday announced sweeping 100 per cent tariffs on films produced outside the United States, a move expected to impact global cinema industries, particularly India's.

"Our movie-making business has been stolen from the United States of America, by other countries, just like stealing candy from a baby," Trump wrote on Truth Socials. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

7 tourist spots reopened after Pahalgam attack

SRINAGAR, 29 SEPT

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Monday reopened seven tourist spots in the valley that were closed after the 22 April Pahalgam terror attack. The move follows directions from Lt Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha after a Unified Headquarters meeting on Friday. "After a thorough security review and discussion in today's UHQ meeting, I have ordered reopening of more tourist spots in Jammu and Kashmir Divisions, temporarily closed as precautionary measures," Sinha said on X. The reopened spots in Kashmir include Aru Valley, Rafting Point Yanner, Akkad Park, Padshahi Park, and Kaman Post. In Jammu, Dagan Top, Dhaggar, and Shiv Cave were reopened. Earlier, the LG had reopened 16 destinations, including parts of Pahalgam, in June. *—PTI*

PM to release RSS centenary stamp, coin

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release a commemorative stamp and coin this week to mark the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) centenary year. Founded on Vijayadashmi in 1925, the RSS completes 100 years on Thursday. The release will take place on Wednesday, with RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale to be in attendance. In his 'Mann Ki Baat' address, Modi praised the RSS for selfless service, discipline, and nation-first ideals, lauding founders K B Hedgewar and M S Golwalkar. Preparations include over one lakh 'Hindu sammelans', a door-to-door outreach campaign, and symposiums on social harmony. RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat launched the 'Sangh Geet' album by Shankar Mahadevan kicking off nationwide centenary celebrations. *—PTI*

Zubeen death: Govt seeks evidence in S'pore

GUWAHATI, 29 SEPT

The Assam government has submitted a formal request to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to invoke the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Singapore in connection with singer Zubeen Garg's death in the Southeast Asian country, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday. "Once invoked, this will ensure full cooperation from Singaporean authorities -- giving us access to case details and assistance to bring back the accused and secure justice," Sarma said in an X post. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

India captain Suryakumar Yadav takes 'imaginary' trophy to his team as ACC officials walk away with the real one during the presentation at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, UAE *PHOTO: PTI*

INDIA FUMES AS NAQVI TAKES AWAY ASIA CUP TROPHY

This was after the Indian side refused to accept it from him

DUBAI, 29 SEPT

> **They've (Indian team) been very disrespectful. He (Suryakumar Yadav) shook hands with me in private at the start of the tournament. But when they're out in the world in front of the cameras, they don't shake our hands**
>
> —Salman Ali Agha, Pakistan captain

The winner's trophy was yet to reach the winners even as politics became the sole talking point a day after one of the most acrimonious Asia Cup finales, which was all about off-field hostilities between India and Pakistan, reducing cricket and its famed spirit of the game to a sidelight.

Suryakumar Yadav and his men held their nerves to win the nail-biting final by five wickets to complete a ninth title-winning campaign, remaining unbeaten through the past fortnight.

But that wasn't the accomplishment which dictated the discourse. The point of discussion, however, was the politics of it all as Asian Cricket Council (ACC) Chief Mohsin Naqvi, also the Pakistan Cricket Board boss and the Interior Minister of his country, walked away with the winner's trophy after the Indians refused to accept it from him.

Naqvi's previous anti-India remarks and the strained relations following the killing of 26 Indians by Pakistan-backed terrorists in Pahalgam earlier this year fuelled the boycott. India maintained a 'No Handshake Policy' throughout the tournament.

At the presentation ceremony, Naqvi waited on stage to hand over the trophy, but the Indian players stayed about 25 yards away, refusing to approach. The BCCI had reportedly informed the ACC that India would not accept the award from him. Once the individual awards were given and the Pakistan team collected their prizes from Bangladesh Cricket Board president Aminul Islam Bulbul, Doull announced: "I have been informed by the Asian Cricket Council that the Indian cricket team will not be collecting their awards tonight. So that does conclude the post-match presentation."

After India's refusal, Naqvi left the stage, and surprisingly, ACC staff followed him, taking the trophy along, leaving the Indian camp shocked. The trophy is now reportedly at the ACC headquarters in Dubai. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 5 & 8

KARUR STAMPEDE

FIR blames TVK but does not name Vijay

CHENNAI/KARUR, 29 SEPT

An FIR filed in the stampede at TVK Chief Vijay's rally in Karur reveals that party functionaries ignored repeated police warnings, leading to the deaths of at least 41 people and injuries to over 60 others on 27 September.

While the FIR does not name Vijay directly, it accuses three TVK office-bearers—Mathiyalagan (Karur district secretary), Bussy N Anand (state general secretary), and CTR Nirmal Kumar (state joint secretary)—of culpable negligence. It states that Vijay conducted unauthorised roadshows, deliberately delayed his arrival, and halted his vehicle amidst the crowd at Velusamypuram, worsening the already overcrowded conditions.

The report notes that TVK cadres were seen sitting on tin sheets and tree branches, which collapsed, causing panic and suffocation. Police had warned the organisers multiple times about the uncontrollable crowd and lack of safety measures, including the absence of medical facilities and drinking water.

The FIR alleges that the delay was a deliberate tactic to showcase political strength by gathering a massive crowd, leaving thousands dehydrated and fatigued under the scorching sun.

A 60-year-old woman succumbed to her injuries on Monday, raising the death toll to 41. Vijay reportedly cancelled his hospital visit to avoid further crowding.

Meanwhile, the Madras High Court has posted TVK's plea seeking a probe into the incident for hearing on 3 October.

Meanwhilw, three people were arrested for spreading rumours on social media about the stampede, Chennai police said on Monday. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Karnataka lowers civil service entry age by 3 yrs

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

The Karnataka government on Monday announced a significant, one-time relaxation of three years in the maximum age limit for candidates seeking direct recruitment into the state civil service.

The Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (DPAR) issued an official order confirming the measure, which applies to all categories of aspirants. The decision effectively withdraws an earlier noti-fication from 6 September, 2025, which had offered a two-year concession.

According to a government statement, the revision followed numerous representations from public rep-resentatives and organisations to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who sought broader eligibility for candi-dates across the state. The DPAR emphasised that this is a one-off measure designed to expand the pool of eligible applicants for prestigious state posts. The order applies to selection processes where application invitations are issued from today until 31 De-cember, 2027. Recruitment authorities have also been instructed not to issue new notifications for direct recruitment or to fill backlog vacancies in certain reserved categories until further notice. This pause remains in effect pending the final implementation of internal reservation within the Scheduled Castes.

Officials noted that the measure aims to benefit aspirants from all backgrounds, providing greater oppor-tunities for service in the state administration. The government reiterated that the age relaxation is strictly temporary and will not be repeated. *—PTI*

X to appeal against K'taka HC backing censorship

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Social media platform X on Monday said it will appeal against the Karnataka High Court's verdict dismissing its petition challenging government officials' authority to issue content takedown orders under the Information Technology Act.

Elon Musk-owned X, through its official handle, said police officers' use of a 'secretive online portal called the Sahyog' to arbitrarily remove content violates Indian citizens' constitutional rights to freedom of speech and expression.

"X respects and complies with Indian law, but this order fails to address the core constitutional issues in our challenge and is inconsistent with the Bombay High Court's recent ruling that a similar regime was unconstitutional," the platform said.

Karnataka High Court had on Wednesday rejected X Corp's petition, emphasising the need for social media regulation, particularly in cases involving offences against women. The bench stressed that India cannot be treated as a 'playground' where information is disseminated in defiance of statutes.

X said it disagrees with the notion that its incorporation abroad prevents it from raising such concerns. *—PTI*

Open to talk on Leh any time: Centre

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

The Centre on Monday reiterated that it remains open to talks with the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) on Ladakh matters at any time, expressing confidence that sustained dialogue would yield positive results.

The Union Home Ministry's statement followed LAB's announcement that it would boycott negotiations until peace is restored in the Union Territory. LAB leaders said they may reconsider if the right steps are taken before the next round of talks scheduled for 6 October.

The outfit has demanded a judicial probe by a retired Supreme Court judge into the 24 September violence, in which four people were killed, scores injured, and over 50 arrested, including activist Sonam Wangchuk under the stringent NSA. The clashes erupted during a shutdown called by LAB to press its demands for statehood and extension of the Sixth Schedule to Ladakh.

Officials said curfew continues in Leh town, with paramilitary forces deployed in strength and mobile internet suspended.

Lt Governor Kavinder Gupta chaired a high-level security meeting on Monday ahead of the last rites of two victims. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

KSRTC raises fares by Rs 20-30 amid Dasara

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has announced the continuation of special fare collections during the Dasara festival, a practice in place for the past 20 years on select days.

During the annual Dasara festival, fares on express, non-stop, and premier services between Bengaluru and Mysuru are increased by Rs 20 and Rs 30 respectively.

For 2025, these special fares will be applied from 26 September to 8 October on the Bengaluru-Mysore route. According to a government notification, KSRTC is permitted to increase fares on special days, fairs, and holidays. This is due to the operation of special services as one-way traffic, often with empty or low passenger return journeys, and the additional costs incurred by deploying vehicles from other divisions. *—PTI*

AFTER TALKS WITH DOVAL

Canada tags Bishnoi as terrorist

OTTAWA, 29 SEPT

Canada has formally designated the Bishnoi Gang as a terrorist entity, citing its role in creating a "climate of fear and intimidation" through violence and transnational criminal activity. The announcement, made on Monday, increases the number of listed terrorist entities under Canada's Criminal Code to 88.

Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree said the gang had deliberately targeted specific communities with terror, violence and intimidation. "Listing this group of criminal terrorists gives us more powerful and effective tools to confront and put a stop to their crimes," he stated.

The designation follows high-level talks in New Delhi between India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his Canadian counterpart Nathalie Drouin, where both countries committed to closer cooperation against terrorism and organised crime.

The listing grants Ottawa the authority to freeze or seize the gang's assets and prevents anyone in Canada from knowingly providing financial or material support. It also strengthens the powers of law enforcement to pursue charges related to financing, recruitment, and travel linked to terrorism.

The Bishnoi Gang, led by imprisoned Indian national Lawrence Bishnoi, is known for extortion, murder, arson, and targeted shootings. Canadian Police say the group has a presence in areas with large diaspora populations and has been connected to high-profile extortion cases.

Calls for the designation were supported by opposition leaders and provincial premiers, including British Columbia's David Eby and Alberta's Danielle Smith. *—PTI*

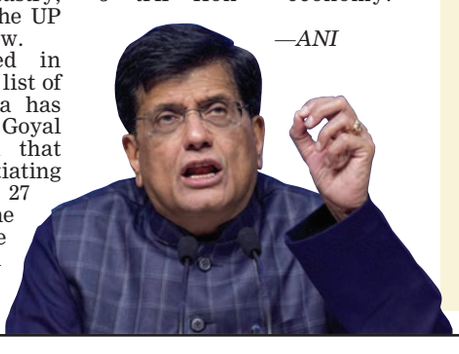
India, Europe FTA to come into effect from 1 Oct: Piyush

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

India's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Iceland, will come into force on 1 October, 2025, as announced by Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, during the UP International Trade Show.

"This deal, finalised in March 2024, adds to the list of trade agreements India has signed in recent years," Goyal stated. He elaborated that India is currently negotiating trade agreements with 27 countries, including the United States, the European Union, and Peru.

The minister highlighted India's economic transformation since 2014, noting that foreign exchange reserves have surged to USD 700 billion, nearly three times higher than when the government took office. He stated, "Within the next two years, India will become the world's third-largest economy—a USD 5 tril- lion economy." *—ANI*



City police arrest 3 'foreigners' for illegal stay

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

The Narcotics Wing of the Central Crime Branch (CCB) of Bengaluru Police on Monday arrested three foreign nationals for allegedly residing illegally in an apartment in Devanahalli. Acting on credible information received on 25 September regarding their presence in the country without valid documentation, the CCB team conducted a raid and detained the individuals,who reportedly entered India illegally in 2024 by boat from Jaffna in Sri Lanka to Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, without passports or visas. With assistance from another foreign national, they later moved into the Devanahalli apartment. The police have not disclosed their identities. Cases have been registered under the Foreigners Act at the CCB Police Station. *—PTI*

Man murders wife, dies by suicide in City

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

A 27-year-old nurse, Manju, was allegedly murdered by her husband, Dharmaseelan, who subsequently hanged himself in the City. The tragedy unfolded at their home in Government Press Layout, Ullal, on Sunday night. Manju's father, Periyaswamy, discovered the scene upon returning from Tumakuru around 9.30pm. Periyaswamy and relatives, found Manju dead with her throat slit, and Dharmaseelan hanging from a ceiling fan. The couple married in September 2022 but had been living apart, with Dharmaseelan, a labourer from Tamil Nadu, working in Dubai. He returned a month ago. *—PTI*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.

PHOTO: SALAR

Jairam Ramesh, Rajeev Gowda visit Bioenergy Board

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

Former Union Minister for Forests and Environment Jairam Ramesh and former Rajya Sabha MP MV Rajeev Gowda visited the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board office on Monday. Chairman SE Sudheendra stressed the need for a new bioenergy policy to accelerate projects, ensure sustainable feedstock supply, and attract investments. He highlighted achievements such as 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol, reducing coal use with biomass pellets, and the need to boost compressed biogas production. Ramesh appreciated the board's initiatives and assured he would urge the State Government to provide grants, entrust projects to the board, and designate it as a nodal agency. *—Salar News*

New Unified Land Acquisition System to synchronise data

To provide real-time data, track litigations

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

- The platform will serve as a single-window digital system for managing the entire lifecycle of land acquisition—from proposal submission to award, compensation, and rehabilitation.

The State government on Monday launched the Unified Land Acquisition System (ULMS) 'data module', a landmark step aimed at bringing transparency, efficiency, and fairness to land acquisition proposals across the State. It will enable all land-acquiring agencies and departments to enter complete details of land acquisition throughout the process lifecycle.

The platform will serve as a single-window digital system for managing the entire lifecycle of land acquisition—from proposal submission to award, compensation, and rehabilitation.

These include revenue, irrigation, urban development, and infrastructure development departments, as well as the Bangalore Development Authority, Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority, National Highways Authority of India, and Karnataka State Highways Improvement Project.

It will also cover Metro, K-Ride, Karnataka Housing Board, and the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board.

The Karnataka Unified Land Acquisition System is a Statewide digital platform designed to harmonise the land acquisition process and track litigations related to ongoing and past proposals, the government said.

"The module is developed by the ULMS Project of the Centre for Smart Governance under the eGovernance Department, with guidance and review from an expert committee constituted by the Revenue Department, senior officers, and field officers," the Revenue Department said in a statement.

"It will also provide real-time information on all land acquisition proposals, with their status displayed on a consolidated dashboard for stakeholders and decision-makers. The system is being enhanced to cover process-based workflows for new proposals in accordance with the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013," the statement said.

"This module ensures that landowners and affected families are given complete transparency in the acquisition process, while also empowering requiring bodies and officials with a robust digital workflow," Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said.

The system balances development needs with the rights of citizens. Further modules with integration of various technologies are being launched in a phased manner, Gowda said. The launch marks the beginning of a phased rollout in which all districts and requiring bodies will progressively adopt the platform, he added. *—PTI*

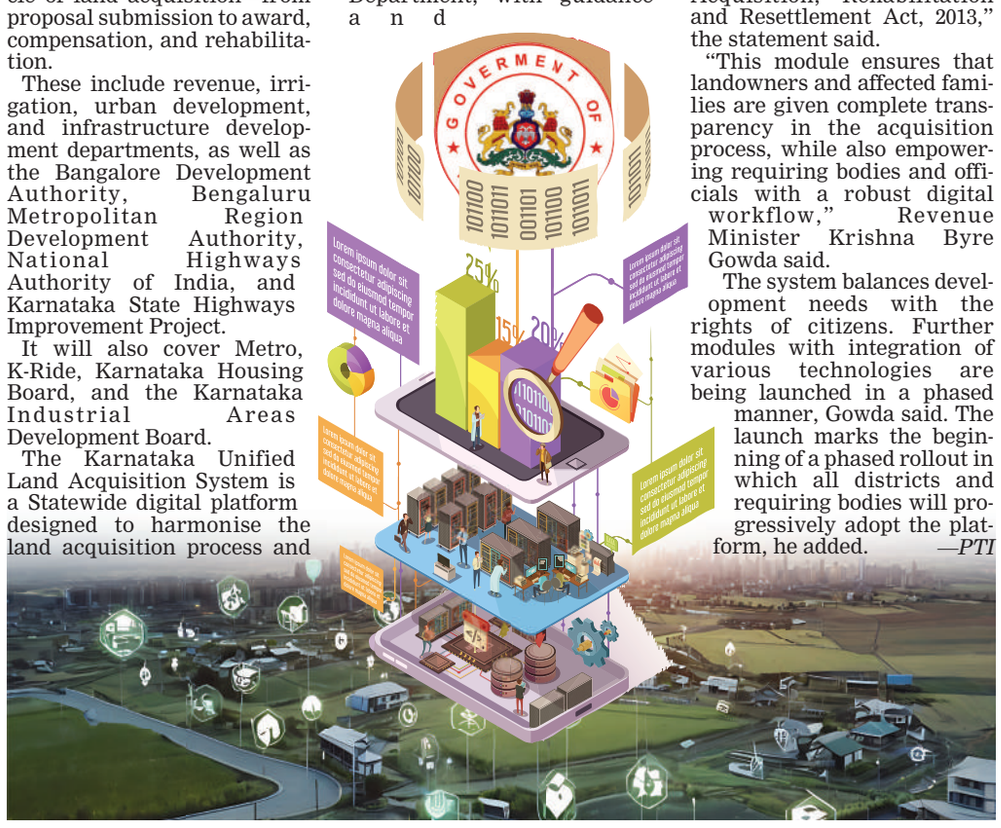


PHOTO: FREEPIK

FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS

People throng KR Market ahead of Ayudha Pooja and Vijayadashami in Bengaluru on Monday
PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD

BJP leaders visit flood hit areas, urge CM for relief

BIDAR, 29 SEPT

State BJP President BY Vijayendra and Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy visited flood-hit areas in Bidar district on Monday to assess the situation.

"I will not criticise Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. I am making a respectful appeal. When Yediyurappa was the CM, there were severe floods, and he travelled across Karnataka immediately released relief without waiting for Central government funds," Vijayendra told press. "Siddaramaiah should also release more funds instead of waiting for the Centre's National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)."

Due to heavy rains and release of water from reservoirs in Maharashtra, flood conditions have arisen in Bidar, Kalaburagi, Yadgir, and Raichur districts. Whenever there is heavy rainfall and water is released from Maharashtra reservoirs, riverside farmers face hardship. The State must find a permanent solution, he stressed.

BJP President BY Vijayendra and Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy meet flood affected people, in Bidar on Monday
PHOTO: SALAR

> **We have not come here for politics. We must stand with farmers in distress and respond to their crisis. We are here to alert the State government.** —BY Vijayendra, State BJP President

KHARGE ASKS CM FOR RELIEF

Kalaburagi district in-charge minister Priyank Kharge visited the rain and flood-affected areas of, while his father and AICC President Mallikarjun urged Siddaramaiah to announce compensation packages. "CM and the ministers concerned will visit the areas on 30 Sept. After that CM will decide on compensation," Mallikarjun said. Mallikarjun said that he would write a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon.

—Salar News with agencies

'SHOWS TRUE COLOURS'

Caste survey: Siddaramaiah slams BJP's boycott call

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday lashed out at BJP leaders who called for a boycott of the ongoing social, economic and educational survey in the State. He said the State BJP leaders, one after another, are urging people to boycott the survey, exposing themselves before the public.

In a statement, Siddaramaiah said, "Our government began the survey to ensure equality. The moment we started, those shouting 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' have revealed their true colours."

"The 'Manusmriti mindset' wants that wealth, opportunity, representation must remain frozen, the poor must remain poor, the backward must remain backward, women must be deprived, and inequality between castes and classes must continue. This is the inner thinking of BJP leaders," he added.

He asserted that the survey would not only bring out the realities of Dalits, backward classes and minorities, but also reveal the condition of the poor and deprived within the so-called forward castes. "This reality is what the BJP does not want people to see".

Without naming anyone, Madhusudan R Naik, Chairman of the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes, said statements to dissuade the public from participating in the survey were against the larger public interest. Noting that leaders had quoted the High Court judgment that participation in the survey was voluntary, Naik said such statements were against the spirit of the order.

Earlier, BJP leaders such as Tejasvi Surya and Pralhad Joshi had urged people not to participate in the survey.

—Salar News with agencies

> **The BJP government at the Centre itself has decided to conduct a caste census. So, the BJP leaders who are opposing the Karnataka survey, will you also oppose the caste census of the Union Government?... Do you even have the courage to raise your voice before the Prime Minister?"**
>
> —Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

CM mulls 1-time permission to houses with no CC, OC

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday directed officials to explore the possibility of granting a one-time permission to the buildings constructed in violation of the rules without the Commencement Certificate (CC) and Occupancy Certificate (OC). Siddaramaiah held a meeting with the officials regarding the Supreme Court directions on mandatory CC and OC to avail essential services like electricity, water and sanitary connection in the state.

"A discussion was held regarding the possibility of granting a one-time permission to the buildings constructed violating the rules, and it was said that the already constructed buildings cannot be demolished," a statement said.

At the meeting, it was noted that people were residing there in such houses. They explored the possibility of regularising buildings through a one-time application.

A follow-up meeting will be held on 8 Oct. *—PTI*

Drugs over Rs 9 cr seized; 2 foreigners held

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

Seven people, including two foreign nationals, were arrested in the City over the past 10 days in separate drug peddling cases, with narcotics worth Rs 9.93 crore seized, police said on Monday.

The Central Crime Branch's (CCB) Anti-Narcotics Wing recovered 3.858kg of MDMA crystals, 41grams of Ecstasy pills, 1.82kg of Hydro Ganja, 6kg of Ganja, a car, and a two-wheeler allegedly used in the crimes. City Commissioner of Police Seemanth Kumar Singh said MDMA and Ecstasy alone are valued at Rs 7.80 crore.

In Mahadevapura, a software engineer confessed to buying Hydro Ganja from Kerala for resale. In Siddapura, three peddlers admitted to selling Ganja for profit. A Dental College student in Adugodi similarly confessed to trading Hydro Ganja.

On 25 September, two foreign nationals were arrested in Hebbagodi for selling drugs to customers. *—PTI*

City Commissioner of Police Seemanth Kumar Singh inspects the seized drugs, in Bengaluru on Friday
PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD

Playwright-actor Yashwanth Sardeshpande dies aged 60

BENGALURU, 29 SEPT

13, SEPT, 1963 - 25, JULY, '25

Yashwanth Sardeshpande, a renowned playwright, actor, and director known for his comic roles, passed away in the City on 29 September at the age of 60, following a cardiac arrest at a private hospital. He is survived by his wife Malati, also an actress, and their daughter. Born in Ukkali, in Vijayapura district, Yashwanth's passion for theatre led him to Ninasam theatre school, where he earned a diploma. He gained fame with the comedy 'All The Best,' which enjoyed over 500 performances across India and abroad. Despite his successes, his theatre school initiative in Hubballi faced challenges. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai and others have expressed their condolences. *—Agencies*

MATTERS OF PRESTIGE

Katti panel sweeps HECS election, drubs Jarkiholi

BELAGAVI, 29 SEPT

Former BJP MP Ramesh Katti's panel swept the Hukkeri Electricity Cooperative Society election, delivering a major setback to Belagavi district in-charge minister Satish Jarkiholi. Katti and former minister AB Patil's group won all 15 seats, retaining control over the society. The Katti family have held the society for the past 25 years.

The campaign saw sharp exchanges between the two camps. Katti and Patil's group played the "locals versus outsiders" card, urging voters to back local candidates, warning that if they voted for Jarkiholi they would be forced to go to Gokak — the family's stronghold— for their official work.

Jarkiholi's side had the support of former Chikkodi MP Annasaheb Jolle, who had earlier lost to Jarkiholi's daughter Priyanka in a previous election. Notably, Jarkiholi is from the Congress, while Jolle is part of the BJP.

Both factions treated the cooperative poll as a matter of prestige, but the Katti panel secured a clean sweep.

"They (Jarkiholi-Jolle) should realise that strong-arm tactics and money does not work all the time," Katti said after the results.

After the results were declared, Katti supporters allegedly pelted stones at Jarkiholi's followers.

The Hukkeri Electricity Cooperative Society holds a unique distinction in India as the only cooperative that generates electricity and directly supplies it to consumers. It functions as an alternative to HESCOM in power distribution in Hukkeri taluk and has supplied electricity to around 125 villages and 20 hamlets in Hukkeri taluk. Elections are conducted every five years.

The rivalry will now shift to the Belagavi District Cooperative Credit Bank elections scheduled for October, where both groups are preparing for another face-off. The Katti panel currently controls the board. *—Salar News*

- The campaign saw sharp exchanges between the two camps, with both factions treating the cooperative poll as a matter of prestige. Yet, the Katti panel secured a clean sweep.

Congress' Satish Jarkiholi and BJP's Ramesh Katti ***PHOTOS: X***

5 held in Mangaluru gold robbery case

MANGALURU, 29 SEPT

Five individuals, including a juvenile, have been arrested in connection with the alleged abduction and robbery of a gold shop employee who was transporting a gold bar on a scooter in Mangaluru of the State. Police officials confirmed the arrests on Monday.

The suspects have been identified as Farish, 18, Safwan, 23, Arafat Ali, 18, Faraz, 19, and a juvenile in conflict with the law.

The incident took place on 26 September near the Venkataramana Temple on Car Street. During the attack, two assailants intercepted the employee, Mustafa, before others in a car forced him into the vehicle, assaulted him, and subsequently abandoned him in Ekkur after stealing the gold bar from his scooter, police said. The plot was orchestrated with help from a former employee of the jewellery store, who provided intelligence on the victim's movements, police said. *—PTI*

Local polls: T'gana SEC announces 5-phase schedule

HYDERABAD, 29 SEPT

The Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) on Monday announced a five-phased schedule for rural local body elections, immediately bringing the Model Code of Conduct into force. Polls will cover 12,733 Gram Panchayats and over 6,300 Mandal and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency seats (MPTC/ZPTC). MPTC and ZPTC elections will be held on 23 and 27 October, with counting on 11 November. Gram Panchayat polls are scheduled for 31 October, 4 and 8 November, with counting on polling dates. State Election Commissioner Rani Kumudini said the announcement came despite a High Court challenge on 42 per cent Backward Classes reservation. Major parties, including BRS and Congress, are ready for the polls. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

PM pens foreword in Italian PM's autobiography

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has written the foreword for the Indian edition of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's autobiography titled I am Giorgia — My Roots, My Principles. In the foreword, Modi described Meloni as a "patriot and outstanding contemporary leader" and called the work "her Mann Ki Baat." He praised her commitment to defending cultural heritage while engaging globally, saying her story "will be well received in India as a refreshing account of leadership and patriotism." The book, originally published in 2021 when Meloni was in opposition, highlights her rise as Italy's first woman Prime Minister and her belief that politics is for everyone, including young women overcoming societal challenges. *—Agencies*

Andhra power consumers to get Rs 895 cr refund

AMARAVATI, 29 SEPT

Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (APERC) has ordered a refund of Rs 895 crore to electricity consumers across the state, marking a historic first since power sector reforms began in 1999. The refund, arising from savings under Fuel and Power Purchase Cost Adjustment, will be automatically credited in equal monthly instalments to bills from November 2025 to October 2026, with no action needed from consumers. The discount equates to roughly 13 paise per unit and will apply to October bills. The state government said this milestone reflects "financial prudence and pro-consumer governance" in a sector which had been long burdened by debt. Refunds are discom-specific. *—Agencies*

T'gana Indiramma Canteens offer breakfast at Rs 5

HYDERABAD, 29 SEPT

New modernised Indiramma Canteens, offering breakfast at just Rs 5, were inaugurated on Monday by Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar and Mayor Gadwal Vijayalaxmi. The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) said that the initiative aims to provide nutritious, quality meals at highly subsidised rates, easing the economic burden on thousands of underprivileged citizens. Each breakfast and meal costs Rs 5, with GHMC subsidising Rs 14 per breakfast and Rs 24.83 per meal, allowing beneficiaries to save up to Rs 3,000 monthly. Guided by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's vision, it serves daily wage earners, students, drivers, migrant workers and underprivileged citizens. 150 canteens operate across Hyderabad, serving over 30,000 people daily. *—PTI*

Hema Malini to lead probe on stampede

The 8-member delegation will include Anurag Thakur, Tejasvi Surya, Brij Lal, Aparajita Sarangi

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman interacts with family members of the stampede victims, in Karur in Tamil Nadu on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

BJP President JP Nadda has formed a delegation of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) MPs to visit Karur in Tamil Nadu to probe the circumstances leading to a stampede that has left 41 people dead and submit a report.

The BJP generally sends its own leaders to the sites of tragic incidents for an inquiry but this time, the party has included MPs from its allies, Shiv Sena and Telugu Desam Party (TDP), in the eight-member committee, in an apparent messaging about the importance it attaches to its partners.

BJP MP from Mathura and actor Hema Malini, who is a Tamil, is the convenor of the delegation, and its members include Shiv Sena's Shrikant Shinde and TDP's Putta Mahesh Kumar.

The other members are Anurag Thakur, Tejasvi Surya, former IPS officer Brij Lal, Aparajita Sarangi and Rekha Sharma, all from the BJP.

The death toll in the stampede at a rally of TVK chief Vijay on Saturday has gone up to 41 with another victim, a 60-year-old woman, succumbing to her injuries at a hospital, officials said on Monday.

The victim succumbed to her injuries at the Karur Government Medical College Hospital, pushing the number of women to 18. Ten children and 13 men were also among the dead. *—PTI*

Govt to frame rules for public events: CM

CHENNAI, 29 SEPT

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Monday called the Karur stampede a "cruel tragedy" and urged political parties and public organisations to frame strict guidelines for responsibly conducting public events.

In a video message shared on X, Stalin said, "What happened in Karur is a tragedy that must never happen again." He recalled the heartbreaking scenes at the hospital, saying they remain etched in his memory.

Stalin appealed to political parties to set aside differences and prioritize public welfare. He emphasized that no leader or cadre would wish for innocent lives to be lost.

Condemning misinformation being spread on social media by many, Stalin warned against spreading rumours or slandering others over the incident. *—PTI*

Rahul speaks with Stalin, Vijay

New Delhi, 29 Sept

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi spoke with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin over phone to enquire about the Karur stampede and also called TVK party president Vijay to convey his condolences over the death of his supporters in the incident, party sources said on Monday. Stalin acknowledged Gandhi's call in a post on X. *—PTI*

'TVK requested for power cut'

Amid controversy over the power outage during TVK chief Vijay's rally, Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (EB) officials confirmed receiving a request from the party for a temporary power cut citing public safety. However, the request, submitted ahead of the 27 September event at Veluchamipuram, was denied, said Chief Engineer Rajalakshmi. The letter asked for electricity to be switched off during Vijay's speech due to the large crowd. Despite this, TVK has alleged foul play, claiming the outage was engineered by police and local politicians with criminal ties. Notably, floodlights failed just as Vijay arrived.

KDA wants Wangchuk's release

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Kargil Democratic Alliance leader Sajjad Kargili (centre) addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

The Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) on Monday demanded the immediate and unconditional release of activist Sonam Wangchuk and others detained after 24 September violence in Leh, warning the Centre that its failure to meet Ladakh statehood and other core demands is "alienating" the people there.

The KDA, which along with the Leh Apex Body is spearheading the agitation, held the Union Territory administration directly responsible for the violence in Leh that left four people dead and dozens injured.

KDA member Sajjad Kargili said that the demands for statehood and constitutional safeguards under the Sixth Schedule are "not negotiable."

He questioned the government for opening fire on protestors and demanded an impartial judicial probe into the violence and accountability from the administration, especially given that it had claimed to have prior intelligence of potential unrest.

Kargili acknowledged that Wangchuk's arrest has amplified the region's issues nationally and predicted a surge in nationwide protests.

He reiterated that dialogue had only occurred following protests, noting that the date for an upcoming meeting with Union Government representatives, likely to take place on Tuesday, was set only after Wangchuk's recent fast began.

He affirmed that the long-standing demands remain non-negotiable, saying, "The idea of Union Territory has failed badly in addressing the aspirations of the people."

Kargili claimed that authorities are using festivals to distract the people of Ladakh and keep them out of policy discussions.

He said the Ladakhis are demanding the protection of their tribal identity and the actual delivery of democracy through statehood. *—PTI*

It should be a matter of deep anguish and outrage that ex-serviceman, Tsewang Tharchin was killed along with three others in the firing on the agitationists five days back

- Jairam Ramesh, Congress Leader

Asia Cup: BJP & Cong have war of words

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had congratulated the Indian cricket team on their win over Pakistan by drawing a symbolic parallel with "Operation Sindoor," the military campaign conducted earlier this year.

The BJP on Monday took a swipe at the Congress and its leader Rahul Gandhi, saying the opposition party seems to have gone into a "comatose state" after India's stunning victory against Pakistan in the Asia Cup final.

The Congress leaders seem to be more pained by Pakistan's defeat, and it is just like Operation Sindoor when they "couldn't bring themselves to congratulate the Indian Army for its stupendous strikes", the ruling party said.

India defeated Pakistan by five wickets in the final on Sunday, clinching its record ninth Asia Cup title.

"Not even a single social media post from the Congress congratulating our national team for thrashing Pakistan thrice in the tournament and bringing the Asia Cup home," BJP IT department head Amit Malviya posted on X.

It seems India's stunning win against Pakistan in the Asia Cup final has left Rahul Gandhi and the entire Congress in a comatose state, he said.

"Once again, Pakistan, Rahul Gandhi, and Congress find themselves on the same side of the divide," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had congratulated the Indian cricket team on their win over Pakistan by drawing a symbolic parallel with "Operation Sindoor," the military campaign conducted earlier this year.

In his post on X, Modi wrote, "#OperationSindoor on the games field. Outcome is the same — India wins!"

Meanwhile, hitting out at PM over his "Operation Sindoor" post on X, the Congress said it is not right to compare a cricket match to a battlefield but when the PM has made that comparison, he needs to learn from the Indian cricket team that when one is close to victory, then "good captains do not announce a ceasefire on the orders of any third umpire". *—PTI*

Kerala Assembly passes resolution against SIR

T'PURAM, 29 SEPT

The Kerala Assembly passed a unanimous resolution opposing the Election Commission of India's (ECI) plan for a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voters' list.

The Congress-led UDF opposition, which had already expressed their strong reservations against the SIR, backed the resolution in the House moved by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who moved the resolution, stated that the ECI's "hasty move" raised concerns about possible "ill-motives" and fears of a backdoor implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

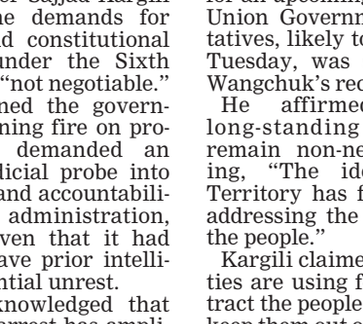
Vijayan highlighted that the recent SIR in Bihar led to "illogical exclusions" and questioned the need for such measures in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal while the Bihar case is being reviewed by the Supreme Court.

He described the process as unscientific and likely to disenfranchise marginalized communities, particularly from minority groups and Scheduled Castes.

The Chief Minister urged the ECI to respect voting rights and conduct the revision transparently. There are widespread fear that the attempt by the EC to implement the SIR, that requires long-term preparation. *—PTI*

BJP leader booked for 'bullet in Rahul's chest' threat

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT



The Peramangalam police on Monday filed a case against BJP leader Printu Mahadevan for allegedly threatening Opposition Leader **Rahul Gandhi**, saying during a television debate that "bullets will pierce his chest," officials said.

The police registered the case following a complaint by Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee Secretary Sreekumar CC.

Mahadevan, a former ABVP leader, made the remark on 26 September while discussing protests in Bangladesh and Nepal, asserting such demonstrations were impossible in India due to support for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The FIR cites Sections 192, 351(2), and 353 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita related to provocation, criminal intimidation, and intentional insult.

The remarks sparked protests by Congress workers across Kerala.

Congress leaders have strongly condemned the remarks made by the BJP leader. *—PTI*

Bihar Deputy CM lied in SC about murder case, says Prashant Kishore

PATNA, 29 SEPT

- Kishor urged Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the BJP to act promptly to avoid public backlash.

Prashant Kishor, founder of the Jan Suraaj Party, has accused Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary of evading justice in a decades-old murder case by "falsely" claiming to be a minor in the Supreme Court.

Kishor held a press conference in Patna, claiming that Choudhary's affidavit from 2020 contradicts his earlier assertion and called for his immediate dismissal.

Choudhary, who is also a former BJP state president, dismissed Kishor's allegations, suggesting he has resorted to acting like an "investigative journalist" to distract from his own alleged corrupt practices.

Kishor stated he would seek an appointment with the governor to press for Choudhary's removal, urging Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the BJP to act promptly to avoid public backlash. He alleged that Choudhary, who claimed to be only 14 during a 1995 murder incident, now states his age as 51, making him liable for prosecution.

Furthermore, Kishor demanded a retraction of a defamation notice from Ashok Choudhary, asserting his involvement in financial irregularities. *—PTI*

TRIBUTE TO INDIAN TROOPS

Not British, but Indians liberated us from Ottomans: Israel Mayor

HAIFA, 29 SEPT

The Israeli city of Haifa on Monday paid tributes to fallen Indian soldiers, with the Mayor noting that the city's school history books are being changed to correct that it was Indian troops and not the British who liberated the city from Ottoman rule.

Mayor of Haifa, Yona Yahav made the remarks while addressing a gathering at the Indian cemetery of fallen soldiers during a ceremony to pay tributes to their bravery.

The Indian Army commemorates 23 September every year as Haifa Day to pay its respects to the three brave Indian Cavalry Regiments - Mysore, Hyderabad and Jodhpur Lancers - that helped liberate Haifa following a dashing cavalry action by the 15th Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade on that date in 1918.

An event to pay tributes to the brave Indian soldiers is also organised every year at the Indian soldiers' cemetery here by the Indian mission and the Haifa municipality.

Several soldiers were honoured for their bravery in this battle.

The battle was described as "almost the only occasion when a fortified town was captured by cavalry on the gallop," India's Ambassador to Israel JP Singh said.

In Israel, memorials to Indian soldiers exist at Haifa, Jerusalem and Ramle..

About 900 Indian soldiers are interred in cemeteries in these cities of Israel.

The Embassy of India, with the help of Israeli authorities, is setting up "The India Trail" in the Holy Land.

India renamed the iconic Teen Murti Chowk, a memorial erected in 1922 in New Delhi to commemorate this historic deed, as 'Teen Murti Haifa Chowk'. *—PTI*

YSRCP MP gets bail in liquor scam

VIJAYAWADA, 29 SEPT

ACB court in Vijayawada has granted bail to YSRCP leader and Rajampet MP PV Midhun Reddy in connection with the alleged Rs 3,200-crore liquor scam from previous YSRCP regime. The ACB Court ordered that Midhun furnish a bond of Rs 2 lakh along with two sureties and specified that he must not leave the country without prior notification to the court. "ACB Court granted bail to Midhun Reddy and was asked to furnish a bond of Rs 2 lakh along with two sureties. He shall not leave the country without prior notice of the court," said Nagarjuna Reddy, the advocate representing Midhun. Midhun was arrested by the Andhra Pradesh police on 19 July after being interrogated for hours by SIT. *—PTI*

EC to publish final voter list of Bihar on 30 Sept

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

The final electoral roll for Bihar is to be published tomorrow, paving the way for the Election Commission to announce the poll schedule for the crucial state next week.

Election officials are travelling to Patna on 4 and 5 October to assess preparations for the forthcoming elections. Sources suggest that the first phase of voting is likely to occur soon after the Chhath festival, which takes place in late October.

To ensure proper oversight, the Election Commission is deploying 470 observers for the elections and related assembly bypolls. A briefing for general, police, and expenditure observers is scheduled for 3 October.

The term of the 243-member Bihar Assembly concludes on 22 November. The previous assembly elections were conducted in three phases amid challenges posed by Covid19.

The publication of the final voter list follows a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, the first in 22 years. The draft electoral rolls, released on 1 August, included 7.24 crore electors and were open for claims and objections until 1 September.

The SIR has faced criticism from Oppositions alleging that it could disenfranchise millions of legitimate voters. EC has maintained its commitment to ensuring that no eligible citizen is excluded from the voter list while also preventing ineligible individuals from being included. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

UP man, kin held for WhatsApp triple talaq

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 29 SEPT

A man and his family members have been booked for allegedly harassing his wife for dowry and illegally pronouncing triple talaq through WhatsApp in Basera village, officials said on Monday.Circle Officer Ravishankar said an FIR was registered on Sunday against Hasan, his mother Rashida, and brothers Salim and Shakir, based on a complaint by Hasan's wife, Asma.Married in November, 2017, Asma stated in her complaint that she was repeatedly harassed for dowry and later forced to return to her parents' home. On 31 March, 2025, Hasan sent her a WhatsApp message pronouncing triple talaq, despite the practice being banned under law. The police after investigations filed a case. —*PTI*

3 of family killed in hit-and-run accident in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Three members of a family were killed after their motorcycle was hit by an unidentified vehicle near the Mukundpur flyover on Outer Ring Road in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri area, police said on Monday. A PCR call about the accident was received around 12.05 am, but by the time police reached the spot, the victims had succumbed. The deceased were identified as Shahid, 60, his son Faiz, 28, and grandson Hamza, 12, residents of north Ghonda, officials said. No eyewitnesses were present, and there is no CCTV at the accident site. However, teams are examining footage from nearby stretches to trace the vehicle. The police have registered a case. —*PTI*

Security forces arrest 4 militants in Manipur

IMPHAL, 29 SEPT

Security forces arrested four militants belonging to different proscribed outfits in Manipur's Imphal West and East districts on Sunday, police said on Monday.In Imphal West, a cadre of the Kangleipak Communist Party (City Meitei), identified as Angom Achou Singh, 34, was arrested from Phayeng Ching Khunou with a double-barrel rifle. In Imphal East, police detained Ngairangbam Apollo Meetei, 37, of KCP (Maoist) from Napetpalli, Md Alam Khan (34) of KCP (PWG) from Khabeisoi, and another cadre of PREPAK (Red Army) from Chanung. In a separate raid, the security forces seized a large cache of arms and ammunition at Sangaithel Longa Koireng Crossing in Imphal West. The seized arms included rifles, pistols, grenades, detonators, helmets, and bullet-proof plates. —*PTI*

Nigerian dupes 100 women via language app, held

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

A 29-year-old Nigerian national was arrested from west Delhi's Tilak Nagar for duping more than 100 women across India by posing as a UK-based Korean businessman on a language exchange app. Identified as Stephane alias K Cee Dominic, he allegedly introduced himself as 'Duck Young,' a jewellery trader, and lured women with promises of relationships and partnerships. He claimed to be stranded at immigration with large cheques, while associates posed as officials demanding money. The fraud came to light after a woman lost Rs 48,500. Investigators traced Dominic using call and bank records, seizing a phone with chats linked to over 100 victims. He had overstayed illegally since 2019. —*PTI*

Clashes in M'rashtra over 'I Love Muhammad' graffiti

Muslims object to the graffiti made on the road; 1 arrested

MUMBAI, 29 SEPT

A protest against an 'I Love Muhammad' graffiti painted on the road in Maharashtra's Ahilyanagar turned violent on Monday, prompting police to baton-charge a stone pelting mob, officials said.

The protesters had blocked the arterial Ahilyanagar-Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar road despite one person being arrested in connection with the graffiti, they added.

"The protest began this morning at Kotla in Kotwali area after someone had painted 'I Love Muhammad' on the road, which was objected to by members of the Muslim community. A complaint was lodged at Kotwali police station against this graffiti," an official said.

"Despite one person being arrested in connection with the graffiti, some people protested. Even as police urged them to maintain law and order, some persons from the mob started pelting stones. Police resorted to lathi-charge to restore normalcy," the official said.

At least 30 persons have been detained in connection with the protests, road blockade and stone pelting, Ahilyanagar Superintendent of Police Somnath Gharge said.

"We used force to maintain law and order. Police is taking action against the accused persons. The situation is under control. Citizens must not believe in or spread rumours," Gharge said.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who is currently touring Yavatmal, said authorities will find out if there is a conspiracy to disturb social peace in the state and polarise society by putting up different kinds of boards.

"Everyone is free to practice their own religion but not to indulge in polarisation," the CM asserted.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister had also warned against strict action against anyone trying to harm the law and order situation in the state after similar protests in Bareilly turned violent after Friday prayers on 26 September. Six people, including a Muslim cleric were arrested in the incident. —*PTI*

Security personnel lathicharge members of the Muslim community protesting against an 'I Love Muhammad' graffiti painted on the road in Ahilyanagar in Maharashtra on Monday PHOTO: PTI

SP city Manush Pareek addresses the media in connection with the violence in Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh PHOTO: PTI

Bareilly clash: Cops detain cleric's aide

BAREILLY, 23

Police on Monday detained a close associate of cleric and Ittehad-e-Millat Council chief Tauqeer Raza Khan in connection with the recent violence in Bareilly during a protest in support of the 'I Love Muhammad' campaign.

Senior superintendent of police, Anurag Arya said that the aide, Nadeem allegedly orchestrated the protest. He called 55 individuals via WhatsApp, who then mobilised a crowd of around 1,600 people.

They conspired to launch an agitation on the lines of anti-CAA and NRC protests, placing minors at the forefront of the demonstration.

Nadeem and his associates were allegedly active at key locations to incite people.

On 25 September, he allegedly visited the police station with associates Nafees and Liaqat, assured the officers that no demonstration would take place on Friday and that Ittehad-e-Millat Council (IMC) supporters would be instructed to pray peacefully in mosques.

However, the letter he submitted to the police was later found to be forged.

A large crowd carrying 'I Love Muhammad' posters clashed with police outside a mosque in Kotwali area after Friday prayer over the cancellation of a proposed demonstration called by Khan, who claimed that authorities denied permission for it.

Khan, along with seven co-accused, was arrested and 39 detained. 10 FIRs were filed against 180 named and 2,500 unidentified rioters.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath warned of action against mischief, while security was intensified in Bareilly and other districts. —*PTI*

RS 24,000 CR ASSETS

Sahara moves SC for assets' sale to Adani

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

The Sahara India Commercial Corporation Ltd (SICCL) has moved the Supreme Court seeking its permission to sell various properties, including Amby Valley in Maharashtra and Shahara Saher in Lucknow, to Adani Properties Private Limited.

The plea would be heard on 14 October.

The interlocutory application, filed in the pending matters related to Sahara group, said pursuant to various orders passed by SC and after taking the permission of this court, the SICCL and the Sahara Group were able to liquidate certain movable and immovable assets, the proceeds of which were deposited into the SEBI – Sahara Refund Account.

Out of a total principal amount of Rs 24,030 crore, the Sahara Group, by way of sale/liquidation have realised an amount of approximately Rs 16,000 crore.

The SICCL further said post the death of Sahara Group chief Subrata Roy in November 2023, the group lost its sole decision maker.

The SICCL said the decision was taken in the interest of all stakeholders so that their claims would be well satisfied and they receive maximum value. SC ordered the disbursal of Rs 5,000 crore of over Rs 24,030 crore deposited by Sahara Group to repay depositors. —*PTI*

Zubeen death: Govt seeks evidence from S'pore

People pay their tributes to late singer Zubeen Garg during his 'Adya Shraddha' in Guwahati in Assam on Monday PHOTO: PTI

GUWAHATI, 29 SEPT

The Assam government has formally requested the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to invoke the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Singapore following the death of popular singer Zubeen Garg.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said activating the MLAT would ensure full cooperation from Singaporean authorities, granting access to case details and assistance in securing justice. Garg reportedly drowned in Singapore on 19 September while on a yacht trip with members of the Assamese community.

A 10-member Special Investigation Team (SIT), led by Special DGP M P Gupta, has been constituted to probe the circumstances surrounding his death. Notices have been issued to 10 individuals, including the singer's manager and the North East India Festival organiser, and lookout notices filed via Interpol.

Two Assam police officers are expected to visit Singapore in connection with the ongoing investigations. —*PTI*

Wife wants justice for Zubeen

GUWAHATI, 29 SEPT

Zubeen Garg's wife, Garima Saikia Garg, on Monday said that the singer's family wants to know what had happened in his last moments that led to his death, and that a proper inquiry should be conducted. She said all those who were there with him on the yacht and at the event must answer. His manager, Siddhartha Sharma, was aware that Zubeen should not venture near water or fire as it could trigger his epileptic seizure, she said. She demanded justice for her husband. —*PTI*

Govt alleges plot against Sabarimala

THIR,PURAM, 29 SEPT

Kerala Devaswom Minister VN Vasavan and the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) have accused sponsor Unnikrishnan Potty of staging a conspiracy regarding the "missing" gold-coated peedam of the Dwarapalaka idols at Sabarimala, recovered from a relative's residence.

Vasavan claimed, "What we understand is that after hiding the peedam, Potty came out with a missing allegation and played a drama. Naturally, we have to suspect whether there is a conspiracy." The peedam was brought to light following a High Court order probing the gold-clad copper plates.

TDB President PS Prasanth condemned Potty's actions, stating, "He lied after knowing that it was in his custody," alleging it was an effort to tarnish the Global Ayyappa Sangamam. In contrast, Potty, based in Bengaluru has denied any wrongdoing, claiming ignorance of the peedam until contacted by a worker. —*PTI*

2 GET JAIL IN 2019 KERALA ISIS CASE

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

A National Investigation Agency (NIA) court in Kochi has sentenced two men from Coimbatore to eight years of rigorous imprisonment for their involvement in recruiting and propagating the ideology of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Muhammad Azharudeen, 27, and Shiek Hidayathulla, 35, were convicted of conspiracy under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and violations of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

The case, initiated in 2019 after the Easter terror attack in Sri Lanka, revealed that the men were attempting to recruit vulnerable youth in South India. The accused had been promoting ISIS ideologies since 2017. NIA found digital evidence linking them to the radical speakers. —*PTI*

Sexual abuse case: Godman taken to crime scene

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Chaitanyananda Saraswati, a self-styled godman accused of sexually harassing 17 women students at a private management institute, was taken to the campus on Monday to recreate the events leading to the allegations, police reported. The 62-year-old was arrested on Sunday at a hotel in Agra.

"He was taken to his office and asked about the CCTVs installed on the campus and hostel," an officer stated. Notably, CCTV footage from outside the hostel bathrooms was reportedly accessible via a mobile phone recovered from him. Saraswati has been remanded in police custody for five days.

During questioning, he is expected to confront three female aides accused of threatening students to delete incriminating messages. Investigators revealed that Saraswati had been avoiding arrest allegedly claiming connections to the Prime Minister's Office. Rs 8 crore in the accused's bank accounts were frozen. —*PTI*

Flood warning on in Andhra; rains batter M'rashtra

C'SAMBHAJINAGAR, 29 SEPT

Rains lashed several states, with farmers in Marathwada in Maharashtra losing their livelihood due to floods and water level in various rivers increasing in Andhra Pradesh.

For Shriram Datkhile, a dairy farmer in Dharashiv district, the floods in Marathwada have cost him his home and livelihood, leaving him with nothing. His family ran a dairy in Telgaon Pimpalgaon village.

However, Datkhile lost 37 cows and 20 goats in the floods last week.

The family now lived in an onion shed built on the farm of an acquaintance.

The family's guava orchard was also damaged in the floods, he said.

One person was killed, while more than 100 people were moved to safer places as heavy rains lashed Palghar district in Maharashtra overnight, inundating villages, damaging houses and roads, officials said on Monday.

Authorities in Andhra Pradesh issued a second level flood warning at the Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada. —*PTI*

India to construct Rs 4,000 cr rail links with Bhutan

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

India and Bhutan have announced a joint plan to construct two cross-border railway links connecting Indian towns with Bhutanese cities, at an estimated cost of over Rs 4,000 crore.

India's announcement of the projects came amid efforts by China to increase its strategic influence over Bhutan.

The announcement was made on Monday by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri during a media briefing. The projects will connect Banarhat in West Bengal with Samtse, and Kokrajhar in Assam with Gelephu, enhancing connectivity between the two countries.

Misri described the initiative as a reflection of the "exceptional trust, mutual respect and understanding" shared by India and Bhutan.

"This will be the first set of rail connectivity projects with Bhutan," he said.

The agreement for the projects was signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhutan last year.

Sharing details of the first 69-km-long line between Kokrajhar and Gelephu, Vaishnaw said that there will be six stations between the two cities and the construction of the complete line will involve two important bridges, two viaducts, 29 major bridges, 65 minor bridges, two goodsheds, one road-over-bridge (ROB) and 39 road-under-bridges (RUBs).

The total investment envisaged at present is around Rs 4,033 crore.

The projects are expected to strengthen bilateral ties and regional trade. —*PTI*

MINOR BROTHER INVOLVED

UP teen shot dead by father over love affair

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 29 SEPT

- The victim, Muskan, was allegedly taken to the upper floor of their house by her father Julfam and 15-year-old brother, where she was shot dead with a pistol.

A 17-year-old girl has been allegedly shot dead by her father and minor brother in Shamli district of Uttar Pradesh in a suspected case of honour killing.

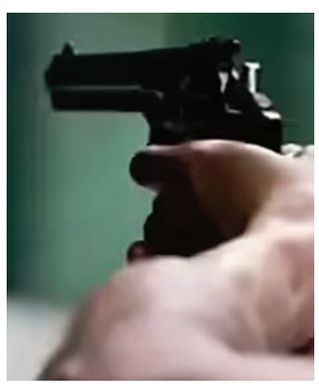
The incident took place in Ambehta village under Kandhla police station limits on 28 September, superintendent of police, NP Singh said.

The victim, identified as Muskan, a Class 12 student, was allegedly taken to the upper floor of their house by her father Julfam and 15-year-old brother, where she was shot dead with a pistol, Singh said.

The SP said an FIR has been registered against Julfam and his minor son under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Both have been arrested and the weapon used in the crime was recovered.

"The accused father has confessed to killing his daughter for tarnishing the family's name," Singh said.

Muskan was in a relation with a boy, which her family opposed. Her father caught her chatting on the phone, leading to the incident. —*PTI*



PERU'S GEN Z RISES

At least 19 people, including a police officer and a journalist, were injured in violent clashes during weekend protests against Peruvian President Dina Boluarte's government. Demonstrators, led by Gen Z activists, marched in Lima against a law passed on 5 September requiring young people to contribute to private pension funds, despite job insecurity and an unofficial employment rate of over 70 per cent. Police hurled tear gas and shot rubber bullets at protesters. Rights groups condemned the police response as excessive, urging respect for peaceful protest
PHOTO: PTI

ASIA CUP CRICKET CONFLICT

No handshakes, no trophy and no spirit of the game

India's ninth Asia Cup crown eventually became a mere footnote as the expected cordiality on a sports field gave way to confrontation in the final clash against Pakistan where the rival players mocked each other both during and after the match.

The tournament had been fraught with tension from the very start, and the animosity carried into the final, which India won by five wickets on a rather long Sunday night.

What started with India's refusal to shake hands to show solidarity with victims of Pahalgam terror attack and the Indian armed forces, descended into a full blown mocking match in the summit clash.

Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah delivered a perfect yorker to dismiss Haris Rauf in the 18th over and, in a cheeky send-off, mimicked the Pakistan pacer's dipping-flight act celebration from the Super 4 clash.

Bumrah's gesture, a crashing-plane motion, went viral across social media.

Rauf's actions were an attempt to mock India's military action under 'Operation Sindoor' after the 26 tourists were gunned down by pakistan-backed terrorists earlier this year. Bumrah's gesture was India hitting back at that attempt at ridiculing the retaliatory action.

India then went on to secure a nerve-jangling win, but when Pakistan's Interior Minister and Asian Cricket Council chairman Mohsin Naqvi stood on the dais to hand the winner's trophy, the Indian team

refused to accept it from him.

It is learnt that the Indian team was game to receiving the trophy from anyone else among the dignitaries on the podium save Naqvi. Dubai Sports City Khalid Al Zarooni, who was also on the dais, was even expected to present India with the Asia Cup.

However, amid the BCCI's clear stand, the Indian players didn't want to go up on stage till Naqvi was around and the PCB chairman did not oblige.

The presentation ceremony got over an hour late without the champions laying their hands on the trophy as Naqvi had walked away with it.

"BCCI would have lodged official protest if Naqvi had tried to forcefully hand over the trophy," a senior BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

In this backdrop, post-match presenter Simon Doull made announcement for the individual sponsors' awards as it is mandatory to acknowledge the stakeholders and investors of the event.

Once the individual awards were given and the Pakistan team collected their prizes from Bangladesh Cricket Board president Aminul Islam Bulbul, Doull announced: "I have been informed by the Asian Cricket Council that the Indian cricket team will not be collecting their awards tonight. So that does conclude the post-match presentation."

As Naqvi got down from the podium and strode towards the exit gate, the ACC event staff, to everyone surprise also walked away with the trophy leaving everyone flummoxed.

The Indian players then turned to social media to celebrate the triumph, making it a point to highlight the missing trophy through emojis.

Arshdeep Singh, Jitesh Sharma, and Harshit Rana mocked Pakistan spinner Abrar Ahmed's signature head-tilt celebration after dismissing Sanju Samson, while Varun Chakravarthy shared symbolic images of a lone tea cup, highlighting the missing trophy and medals that are yet to reach the victorious side.

The Indian players, including Hardik Pandya, even posted pictures of themselves with trophy emojis in place of the real cup.

The tension between the two sides had been palpable throughout the tournament.

India's 'No Handshake Policy' didn't sit well with the rival camp, which even blamed Zimbabwean match referee Andy Pycroft for the fiasco.

Rauf further escalated the hostilities during the Super 4 match with verbal taunts and an obscene gesture mimicking the downing of a plane, in retaliation to Indian supporters chanting 'Kohli, Kohli', a nod to the match-winning sixes Virat Kohli had struck off him during the 2022 T20 World Cup at Melbourne.

Rauf was at it again during the final, repeating the gesture that seems to have become his trademark celebration of late.

Pakistan skipper Salman Ali Agha, however, expectedly found fault primarily with India's approach, calling it "disrespectful" towards the game and a poor example for young fans who look up to players as role models.

"What India have done this tournament is very disappointing. They are not disrespecting us by not shaking hands, they are disrespecting cricket. Good teams don't do what they did," he said at the post-match press conference. The Indians, however, spent the evening celebrating minus the trophy.
—PTI

Dignitaries are seen speaking to the umpires as the presentation ceremony is delayed by over an hour. In videos going viral on social media, dignitaries — including Asian Cricket Council President Mohsin Naqvi — wait on stage, while the Indian players sit on the ground just a few feet away, scrolling through their phones and pointedly refusing to collect the trophy from Naqvi
PHOTO: PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

Karur stampede: 12 hours that led to the tragedy

Many factors including crowd swelling from the morning could have contributed to the stampede that claimed 40 lives at actor-politician Vijay's rally here, residents who witnessed the event said.

Imagine people gathering at a specific location steadily for nearly 12 hours and not vacating the spot where they could not quench their thirst or have the luxury of even elbow space to move, they observed.

To further complicate the situation, pregnant women and young parents accompanied by their kids, too, descended at Velusamypuram since 7am on 27 September, says a resident who has been residing close to the venue for nearly six decades.

Apart from her, few others who had witnessed the stampede and police lathicharge, from close quarters, claim that a combination of factors could have led to the tragic death of 40 people due to stampede.

"The people, mostly fans, started arriving at the venue from 7am to 7pm and scores of people on two-wheelers accompanied the campaign vehicle of Vijay, and they pushed the waiting crowd back to gain a foothold," a septuagenarian woman said.

The police had to baton charge a section of the crowd to ensure Vijay's vehicle reached the venue. "Where will the people go when there isn't space to step aside," she asked and added it was foolishness of some women to bring their minor kids.

"Some of the people got on our roof and a few climbed on an electric post to get a better view of Vijay. They refused to get down from the pole or leave our house," another resident said.

Yet another resident, a man in his mid-thirties, said "many felt thirsty and they could not even move to access the water bottles. Some of the people climbed a tree and the branch crashed making them fall down."

Nothing seemed like a usual gathering for a political meeting. Tamilaga Vettri Kahagam party founder Vijay's arrival at the venue was delayed at Namakkal where he addressed the first meeting of the day. He was expected to address the meeting here at 12 noon.

The crowd that had gathered became restless and to further complicate the situation those from the neighbouring districts started arriving after learning that Vijay would speak only in the evening, a police official said.

He took over one-and-a-half hours to cover a two km stretch from the Karur-Tiruchirappalli highway roundabout to the Karur-Erode highway. Immediately upon his arrival, the floodlights connected to a generator turned off and a woman started to search for her missing minor daughter.

Some close to Vijay's van swooned and he threw water bottles to help revive them. He even appealed to the party men to allow a couple of ambulances to pass with the sick persons. People panicked when a stampede occurred near a generator and another near Ganapathy Bakery. A few people fell down and were trampled.

Vijay took over one-and-a-half hours to cover a 2km stretch from the Karur-Tiruchirappalli highway roundabout to the Karur-Erode highway. The crowd that had gathered became restless, further complicating the situation
PHOTO: PTI

- As Vijay left the venue, a crowd attempted to follow his campaign vehicle, leading to another stampede.

And as Vijay left the venue winding up his speech quickly, a motley crowd attempted to follow his campaign vehicle, leading to another stampede.

Some political parties criticised the TVK as lacking experience in organising political events of such magnitude, and some demanded an apology from him for the tragedy.

Former chief minister and AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami indicated that Vijay could not be faulted entirely. The police and state government should have made proper arrangements to ensure the public were safe, he said.

"People attended political rallies with a hope that the parties, police and government would ensure their safety. The police should have anticipated the crowd and taken appropriate precautionary measures," Palaniswami told reporters.

"The venue was a narrow space with no exit. The police protection was not adequate to ensure public safety, say patients and their relatives with whom I interacted at the hospital today," DMDK general secretary Premalatha Vijayakanth said. The police lathi charge caused the people to panic and trample others, she told reporters. "The police should have allocated a spot that was more spacious with exit routes," Premalatha said and wondered why some ambulances sported the TVK party flags.

"Vijay himself had raised this issue at his meeting," she added.
—PTI

With cancelled bookings, violence dampens Ladakh's tourism

Ladakh's tourism sector, already reeling from setbacks earlier this season, has been dealt another blow with the curfew in Leh following last week's violence.

Stakeholders said the industry was first hit by widespread cancellations after the 22 April Pahalgam terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir, and the fresh disturbances have further dented travellers' confidence.

An indefinite curfew was imposed in Leh town on 24 September following clashes during a shutdown called by a constituent of Leh Apex Body, which has been spearheading an agitation for statehood and the extension of Sixth Schedule to Ladakh. Four people were killed and over 150 others injured in the violence.

Barring a four-hour relaxation in two phases on Saturday afternoon, the town remained under strict curfew for the sixth consecutive day on Monday with mobile internet services suspended. This has triggered booking cancellations and caused hardships to tourists and local stakeholders.

"The cancellation of advance bookings by our guests has been continuing on an almost daily basis for the last one week. There is shortage of merchandise due to closure of the town since last Wednesday," Naseeb Singh, a hotel manager, told PTI.

Singh, who has worked in Leh town for nearly a decade, said he is witnessing such a situation for the first time in the otherwise peaceful region. He said they are facing a lot of hardships, along with the tourists stranded in the Ladakh capital.

Rigzin Dorjey, a local transporter, said Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 lives in April had severely impacted Ladakh tourism even though the two are separate Union Territories.

"The Pahalgam incident virtually paralysed the tourism sector in Ladakh. We started receiving guests only a month after Operation Sindoor. But Wednesday's incident has once again hit us hard," he said.

Operation Sindoor was launched by Indian armed forces on 7 May to hit terror infrastructure in Pakistan and avenge the Pahalgam attack.

Echoing Dorjey, a local hotelier, who wished not to be named, said they are praying for early restoration of normalcy as "each day of uncertainty means lost income for thousands of families who depend on tourism." Tourists stranded in the region said they were confined to their hotels and were unable to access key attractions.

"Upon my arrival here, to my shock, I found that everything was closed. I was not even able to exchange my currency and buy food. I was planning some sightseeing in Pangong lake but I failed to get the permit," said Sheena, a tourist from Taiwan. She said she hoped the situation would improve quickly so that everybody can get back to work. The tourist said the policemen deployed on deserted roads tell people that the restrictions may not be relaxed today as well.

Arpana Dass, who had reached Leh from Delhi on Sunday, said she was disappointed on seeing the markets closed and mobile internet services down. "We could not go anywhere due to restrictions and hopefully, everything will be fine soon," she said.

Shruti, another tourist, said she wanted to explore the local tradition, do some shopping and visit some famous places but the prevailing situation is making it very difficult.

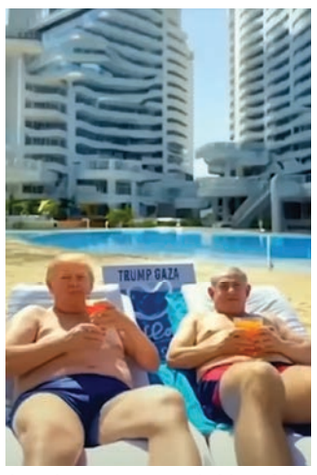
"We came to see Ladakh's mountains and monasteries, but now we are just stuck in our rooms. Everyone here is simply wishing that peace returns soon," she said.

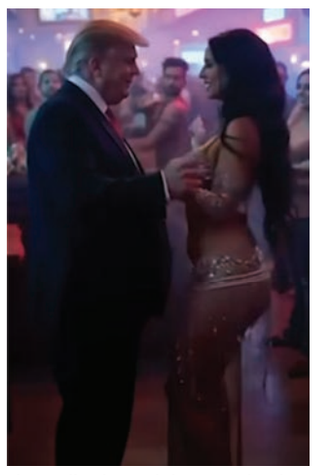
A police official defended the curfew saying that it was necessary to prevent further disturbances, but hoped that it ends soon.
—PTI

Security personnel stand guard on a road amid curfew, days after violence during protests for Ladakh statehood, in Leh
PHOTO: PTI

TRUMP, BIBI TO MEET IN WHITE HOUSE

Both leaders hint at imminent ceasefire, Don says great things are coming





US President Donald Trump had earlier shared an AI-generated video of the 'what's next' in Gaza, which included him and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sipping drinks by a pool **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

WASHINGTON, 29 SEPT

Days after his defiant speech at the United Nations rejecting demands to end the war in Gaza, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is set to confer with his most important supporter, US President Donald Trump.

But Monday's meeting with Trump in Washington comes at a tenuous moment. Israel is increasingly isolated, losing support from many countries that were long its steadfast allies. At home, Netanyahu's governing coalition appears more fragile than ever. And the White House is showing signs of impatience.

The question now is whether Trump, who has offered steadfast backing to Netanyahu throughout the war, will change his tone and turn up the pressure on Israel.

In a post Sunday on Truth Social, Trump wrote: "We have a real chance for GREATNESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ALL ARE ON BOARD FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL, FIRST TIME EVER. WE WILL GET IT DONE!!!"

Trump and Netanyahu are scheduled to meet in the Oval Office, and a joint press conference is expected later.

On Friday, Trump raised expectations for the meeting with Netanyahu, telling reporters on the White House lawn that the U.S. was "very close to a deal on Gaza." Netanyahu also said recently that Israel was making plans for a ceasefire.

Trump had also met Arab leaders on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York and showed them a 21-point proposal, which includes a ceasefire, the release of hostages and Palestinian prisoners and the allowing further humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Yet, Trump and Netanyahu's ties have become strained recently. Although they joined forces during Israel's war on Iran in June, with the US stealth bombers striking three of Tehran's nuclear sites, Trumo recently expressed frustration over Israel's attacks on Qatar. *—PTI*

Tony Blair to become head of Gaza?

LONDON, 29 SEPT

Former UK prime minister Tony Blair is in the works to become the head of Gaza under Trump's new 21-point-peace plan.

Trump plans to establish a new governing body in the region – the Gaza International Transitional Authority (GITA). Blair is likely to head the GITA for several years. It would seek a UN mandate to serve as Gaza's "supreme political and legal authority" before handing control back to Palestinians.

Hamas, however, rejected the proposal. Husam Badran, senior Hamas leader, reportedly described Blair as "a negative figure who deserves to stand before international courts for his (war in Iraq)". *—Salar News*

Typhoon Bualoi kills nine in Vietnam

HANOI, 29 SEPT

Heavy rain and strong winds from Typhoon Bualoi have resulted in catastrophic flooding across central Vietnam, claiming at least nine lives and causing widespread destruction before weakening to a tropical storm. The storm moved into Laos on Monday, with winds recorded at 74km. Homes, schools, and power infrastructure suffered extensive damage, while temporary bridges were swept away, leaving several highland communities isolated. Recovery teams are searching for 17 fishermen reported missing. Over 347,000 households lost power before Bualoi made landfall around 12.30am on Sunday, with winds reaching up to 133km. The storm previously caused 20 fatalities in the Philippines. *—PTI*

Sumud Flotilla nears Gaza amid rising tensions

CONAKRY, 29 SEPT

The Global Sumud Flotilla, comprising 44 ships loaded with humanitarian supplies and hundreds of delegates, is on the brink of reaching Gaza, just 366 nautical miles away. Scheduled to arrive within four days, the coalition has entered a highly risky "orange zone" where Israeli naval interceptions are likely. Speaking aboard the flotilla, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg stated, "We are not just delivering humanitarian aid but also spreading hope and solidarity." With the flotilla coming closer, Israel's navy is reportedly preparing for potential interception to prevent the ships from docking amidst a dire humanitarian crisis in Gaza. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Hong Kong activist denied Singaporean visa

BEIJING, 29 SEPT

Exiled Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Nathan Law said he was denied entry to Singapore on Saturday in what he believes was a politically motivated move. Law, who lives in London, was detained at Changi Airport for four hours before being refused entry. He was travelling from San Francisco to attend a private event. He fled Hong Kong in 2020 after Beijing imposed the law. Singapore's Home Affairs Ministry confirmed the decision, stating his presence was "not in Singapore's national interests" and noting that Hong Kong police have an arrest warrant for him under the territory's National Security Law. Authorities there have issued a reward for information leading to his arrest for alleged collusion and incitement to secession. *—PTI*

Pro-EU party wins Moldova election amid Russian scare

CHISINAU, 29 SEPT

Moldova's pro-Western governing party, the Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS), has emerged victorious in a parliamentary election seen as a pivotal choice between East and West. With nearly all votes counted, PAS garnered 50.1 per cent, defeating the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc, which received 24.2 per cent. The Russia-friendly Alternativa Bloc followed, along with the populist Our Party and the right-wing Democracy at Home party, which also gained sufficient votes to enter parliament. Cristian Cantir, an international relations associate professor at Oakland University, stated, "PAS's victory is a clear win for pro-European forces in Moldova, ensuring continuity in their pursuit of EU integration." He added that a PAS majority prevents the instability of coalition formation that could hinder reform progress. *—PTI*

US govt nears shutdown over budget cuts

WASHINGTON, 29 SEPT

Democratic and Republican congressional leaders are set to meet President Donald Trump at the White House on Monday in a late effort to avoid a government shutdown, but both sides have shown hardly any willingness to budge from their entrenched positions.

If government funding legislation is not passed by Congress and signed by Trump on Tuesday night, many government offices across the nation will be temporarily shuttered and non-exempt federal employees will be furloughed, adding to the strain on workers and the nation's economy.

Republicans are daring Democrats to vote against legislation that would keep government funding mostly at current levels, but Democrats so far have held firm. They are using one of their few points of leverage to demand that Congress extends health care benefits.

Trump has shown little interest in entertaining Democrats' demands on health care, even as he agreed meet with Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, Senate Majority Leader John Thune, House Speaker Mike Johnson and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries. Trump has said repeatedly that he fully expects the government to enter a shutdown this week.

"If it has to shut down, it'll have to shut down," Trump said Friday. "But they're the ones that are shutting down government." *—PTI*

Oregon sues don for sending N'tl Guard

The state of Oregon and the city of Portland have sued the Trump administration as 200 members of the Oregon National Guard are being placed under federal control and deployed to protect immigration enforcement officers and government facilities. The asks a federal court in Portland to stop the Trump administration from deploying troops and declare the deployment unlawful.

Don slaps 100% tariff on non-US made films

WASHINGTON, 29 SEPT

US President Donald Trump on Monday announced sweeping 100 per cent tariffs on films produced outside the United States, a move expected to impact global cinema industries, particularly India's.

"Our movie-making business has been stolen from the United States of America, by other countries, just like stealing candy from a baby," Trump wrote on Truth Social, blaming California's economic woes on "weak and incompetent" Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom.

"To solve this long-time, never-ending problem, I will be imposing a 100 per cent tariff on any and all movies that are made outside of the United States," he added.

The policy is expected to affect Indian films, which are hugely popular among the Indian diaspora in the US. However, experts warn the tariffs could backfire on Hollywood itself, as major studios such as Disney, Warner Bros, and Paramount often shoot abroad to lower production costs.

In a separate announcement, Trump declared a 100 per cent tariff on all branded or patented pharmaceutical products imported into the US, unless the manufacturer is building a plant in America. This policy will take effect from 1 October, 2025.

The Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) responded, clarifying that the new rule targets branded and patented drugs only, leaving India's substantial generic medicine exports unaffected.

Trump also hinted at tariffs on imported furniture, specifically to revive manufacturing in North Carolina, which he claims has lost its industry to China and other nations.

"In order to make North Carolina, which has completely lost its furniture business to China and other countries, GREAT again, I will be imposing substantial tariffs on any country that does not make its furniture in the United States," he declared, adding that further details would follow.

In an unrelated attack, Trump criticised New York City mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani, calling him a "self-proclaimed communist" and warning he would be a disaster for the city. "He won't be getting any [federal] money from me as President," Trump declared, calling Mamdani's promises "fake" and communism a repeatedly failed ideology. *—PTI*

4 killed, 70 injured in Russian drone, missile attacks on Ukraine

KYIV, 29 SEPT

Rescuers work at the site of an apartment buildings damaged during a Russian attack in Kyiv, Ukraine **PHOTO: PTI**

Russia launched a significant wave of drones and missiles on Ukraine overnight, resulting in at least four fatalities and 70 injuries, with Kyiv enduring the most intense assault. This marked the first major bombardment since a deadly airstrike last month that claimed 21 lives.

Tymur Tkachenko, head of the Kyiv City Administration, reported the casualties on Telegram, including a 12-year-old girl. Thick black smoke obscured the city centre after the strikes, prompting Tkachenko to state, "The Russians have restarted the child death counter."

In total, Russia deployed 595 drones and 48 missiles, with Ukraine's air defences intercepting 566 drones and 45 missiles. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the assault as "vile", asserting it underscored Russia's longstanding aggression.

Meanwhile, US Vice President JD Vance mentioned that the US was considering Ukraine's request for Tomahawk cruise missiles.

He added that "the Russians have got to wake up and accept reality here."

Earlier, Zelenskyy said that Ukraine was in talks with the US to secure a "mega (arms) deal" and a "drone deal" for approximately USD 90 billion. *—PTI*

Iran executes 'one of Israel's most important' spies

DUBAI, 29 SEPT

Iran has executed Bahman Choobiasl, accused of spying for Israel, continuing the country's largest wave of executions in decades. The judiciary said Choobiasl met with officials from the Israeli spy agency Mossad and worked on "sensitive telecommunications projects," reporting on the "paths of importing electronic devices."

The judiciary's news outlet Mizan said he was "one of the most important spies for Israel in Iran".

It also comes amid a series of death sentences for alleged espionage since Iran's war with Israel in June, which involved missile strikes and air attacks that killed numerous military personnel.

Human rights groups in Oslo and Washington estimate more than 1,000 people have been executed in Iran this year, though the true number is believed to be higher, as the authorities do not report every death penalty. *—PTI*

US President Donald Trump's team had shared an image of him as Marvel super-villain Thanos during his campaign. In the 'Avengers' series, Thanos killed half of all life in the universe with the snap of a finger **PHOTO: X**

3 killed as violence escalates after Bangladesh gangrape

DHAKA, 29 SEPT

- The clashes followed an alleged gangrape of an eighth-grade schoolgirl in Khagrachhari district, bordering India and Myanmar. Tribal populations have been leading the agitation

Violence has spread to the tribal-dominated hill district of Khagrachari in Bangladesh. Three tribal people have been killed in the violence, the country's home ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

Tensions remain high in the area. The Army and police have been deployed there.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs has expressed deep sorrow over the incident in which three hill people were killed and 13 army personnel, including a major, three policemen, including the OC of Guimara Police Station and many others were injured in an attack by miscreants ", the statement said. "The ministry has assured that legal action will be taken against those involved in this incident. No culprit will be spared."

Local media reports said that tensions spread over the alleged gangrape of a tribal schoolgirl. A group called Jummu Students held a protest against the rape.

At one point, clashes broke out between the tribal and the Bengalis. *—ANI*

FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Massive protests grounds PoK to a halt

MUZAFFARABAD, 29 SEPT

The strike was called for by the Awami Action Committee **PHOTO: X**

A complete shutdown strike hit Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoK) on Monday, bringing all markets, shops and business centres to a close. The strike, reportedly called for by the Awami Action Committee (AAC) demanded that the people were granted their fundamental political and economic rights.

Streets and alleys across the region were deserted as the Kashmiri population shows strong support for the "shutter-down and wheel-jam" strike.

According to Samaa TV, although schools were officially open, classrooms remained empty as most students stayed home. It said that internet and mobile phone services remained suspended throughout PoK for the second straight day. Even landline telephone services were cut off.

The AAC has presented a list of 38 demands. Key among them are the elimination of 12 reserved seats for refugees and the removal of privileges granted to the political elite. The Committee also announced plans to hold a rally to intensify its protest movement.

"Our campaign is not against any institution but for the fundamental rights denied to our people for over 70 years. Enough is enough. Either deliver on rights or face the wrath of the people," Shaukat Nawaz Mir, an AAC leader said in Muzaffarabad on Monday, according to Dawn.

He said the movement was a response to years of government neglect and corruption, and the region's resources being used for political patronage and bribery.

The AAC said that the strike was "Plan A" of their movement, saying that they had backup strategies up until "Plan D". *—Agencies*

Moody's retains India rating at 'Baa3' with 'stable' outlook

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Global rating Moody's on Monday affirmed India's long-term local and foreign-currency issuer ratings and the local-currency senior unsecured rating at 'Baa3' with a 'stable' outlook on the back of robust economic growth and sound external position.

The rating agency also affirmed India's other short-term local-currency rating at P-3. "

The rating affirmation and stable outlook reflect our view that India's prevailing credit strengths, including its large, fast-growing economy, sound external position, and stable domestic financing base for ongoing fiscal deficits will be sustained," it said in a statement.

These strengths lend resilience to adverse external trends, in particular as high US (Aa1 stable) tariffs and other international policy measures hinder India's capacity to attract manufacturing investment, it said.

India's credit strength is balanced by long-standing weaknesses on the fiscal side, which will remain, it said.

Strong GDP growth and gradual fiscal consolidation will lead to only a very gradual decline in the government's high debt burden, and will not be sufficient to materially improve weak debt affordability, especially as recent fiscal measures to reinforce private consumption erode the government's revenue base, it said.

India's long-term local-currency (LC) bond ceiling remains unchanged at A2, and its long-term foreign-currency (FC) bond ceiling remains unchanged at A3, it said.

Moody's further said that India's credit profile benefits from its strong growth potential, underpinned by a large domestic market and favourable demographics that have historically supported resilient, demand-driven expansion, and helped insulate the economy from external shocks. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Mkts close lower ahead of RBI rate decision

Sensex drops by 61.5 points, while Nifty slips by 19.8 points

MUMBAI, 29 SEPT

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed marginally lower in a volatile session on Monday, extending their downtrend to the seventh day mainly due to selling in banking shares and persistent foreign fund outflows ahead of the RBI's interest rate decision later this week.

After gyrating between gains and losses in a restricted trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 61.52 points or 0.08 per cent to settle at 80,364.94. During the day, it hit a high of 80,851.38 and a low of 80,248.84.

Falling for the seventh consecutive session, the 50-share NSE Nifty slipped 19.80 points or 0.08 per cent to 24,634.90. Nifty has dropped more than 3 per cent in the seven straight sessions due to selling by foreign investors.

Auto and FMCG shares retreated while realty, energy, and metal shares advanced.

Among Sensex firms, Maruti, Axis Bank, Larsen & Toubro, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, Adani Ports and Hindustan Unilever were the laggards.

However, Titan, State Bank of India, Eternal and Trent were among the major gainers.

The BSE midcap gauge went up by 0.34 per cent while smallcap index dipped 0.17 per cent.

Oil & Gas jumped 1.96 per cent, energy (1.10 per cent), realty (0.97 per cent), power (0.46 per cent), services (0.41 per cent) and metal (0.39 per cent).

In seven trading days, he BSE bencmark has tanked 2,649.02 points or 3.19 per cent, and the Nifty dived 788.7 points or 3.10 per cent.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended lower. Equity markets in Europe were trading higher. US markets ended higher on Friday. *—PTI*

Auto and FMCG shares retreated while realty, energy, and metal shares advanced **PHOTO: PTI**

RS 3,000 CRORE IPO

WeWork price band set at Rs 615-648/share

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Co-working space operator WeWork India on Monday announced a price band of Rs 615 to Rs 648 per share for its upcoming Rs 3,000 crore initial public offering (IPO).

At the upper end, the company is valued at around Rs 8,685 crore.

The issue will open for public subscription on 3 October and close on 7 October, while bidding for anchor investors will take place on 1 October, according to the company's public announcement.

The IPO, which is entirely an Offer-for-Sale (OFS) of up to 4.63 crore equity shares, will see the promoter group entity, Embassy Buildcon LLP, and investor 1 Ariel Way Tenant Ltd (part of WeWork Global) divest their stakes.

The proposed IPO is worth Rs 3,000 crore at the upper end.Currently, the Embassy Group holds about 76.21 per cent in WeWork India, while WeWork Global owns 23.45 per cent.

Since the issue is an OFS, WeWork India will not receive any proceeds from the issue and the funds will go entirely to the selling shareholders. *—PTI*

Tata Capital sets IPO price bandat Rs 310-326/share

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Tata Capital, a prominent non-banking financial company, has unveiled the price band for its much-anticipated Initial Public Offering (IPO), set at Rs 310-326 per share, aiming to raise Rs 15,512 crore in what is poised to be the largest IPO of 2025. At upper end of the band, the firm's valuation will reach approximately Rs 1.38 lakh crore.

The IPO will open for subscription on 6 October and close on 8 October, with anchor book bidding commencing on 3 October. The offering comprises 47.58 crore shares, including a fresh issue of 21 crore equity shares and an Offer for Sale (OFS) of 26.58 crore shares.

Proceeds from the IPO will enhance the company's Tier-1 capital base to support future lending requirements. Tata Capital is expected to debut on the stock market on 13 October. *—PTI*

Rupee falls by 7P, closes at 88.79 against USD

MUMBAI, 29 SEPT

Rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day lower by 7 paise at its all-time closing low of 88.79 (provisional) against US dollar on Monday, on persistent foreign capital outflows and rise in risk-off sentiments. Forex traders said rupee is hovering near its all-time low level as investors remained concerned over global trade uncertainties and impact of US visa fee hike on India's IT services exports. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.69 against the US dollar, and finally settled for the day with a loss of 7 paise at 88.79 (provisional), its lowest-ever closing level so far. On Friday, the rupee rebounded from its all-time low to close 4 paise higher at 88.72 against the US dollar. *—PTI*

Silver at all-time high of ₹1.5L/kg; gold surges ₹1,500

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Silver prices on Monday soared by Rs 7,000 to hit an all-time high of Rs 1.5 lakh per kilogram in the national capital, while gold also scaled a new peak of Rs 1,19,500 per 10g amid strong global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity jumped Rs 1,500 to reach a lifetime high of Rs 1,19,500 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes. Silver prices witnessed a sharp rally, climbing Rs 7,000 to touch a record Rs 1,50,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes), extending gains for the fourth straight session. Spot gold surged nearly 2 per cent to hit an all-time high of USD 3,824.61 per ounce, while silver advanced more than 2 per cent to USD 47.18 per ounce. *—PTI*

Zomato unveils 'Healthy Mode' for nutritious meals

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Food delivery platform Zomato has launched a new 'Healthy Mode' feature, helping users easily discover and order nutritious food. The service is currently available in Gurugram, with plans to expand to other cities in response to rising demand for healthy options, particularly among the 18 to 45 age group. Zomato has employed advanced AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) to support restaurant partners, generating detailed macronutrient profiles and assigning a 'Healthy Score' to each dish, ranging from 'Low' to 'Super'. Deepinder Goyal, Zomato's Eternal Founder, encouraged users to try the feature, describing it as a step towards the company's mission of providing "better food for more people." The launch reflects a growing trend in tech-driven solutions to promote healthier eating. *—PTI*

Lupin subsidiary to acquire VISUfarma for €190 million

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Indian pharmaceutical company Lupin has announced that its wholly-owned subsidiary, Nanomi BV, will acquire Amsterdam-based VISUfarma BV for 190 million euros. The deal strengthens Lupin's European presence and advances its global specialty ophthalmology franchise. VISUfarma offers a portfolio of over 60 branded eye health products and has an established commercial footprint across major European markets, including the UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Lupin CEO Vinita Gupta said the acquisition will be "immediately accretive" and broaden the company's specialty segment, particularly in dry eye, glaucoma, retinal health, and nutraceuticals. The transaction will be financed with existing cash and is expected to close by the end of 2025. The move positions Lupin to capitalise on growing demand in the global ophthalmology market, driven by an ageing population and rising prevalence of eye-related conditions. *—PTI*

Consumer panel get 3,000 complaints after GST cuts

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

The National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has registered nearly 3,000 complaints concerning Goods and Services Tax (GST) since the recent implementation of reduced tax rates, as reported by Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare on Monday. "Every day, we are receiving complaints. So far, we have received close to 3,000 consumer complaints. We are sending them to the CBIC (Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs) for further action," Khare stated at an event.

The Consumer Affairs Ministry is actively monitoring incidents where consumers may be misled by discount practices that fail to convey the benefits of diminished GST rates. To enhance their oversight, the ministry is incorporating artificial intelligence and chatbot technology to better analyse complaints from various sectors. Khare emphasised the ministry's focus on identifying dark patterns or misleading advertisements related to promotional discounts that may not genuinely pass on GST cuts to consumers.

The surge in complaints comes alongside government efforts to ensure that consumers receive the full benefits of the tax cuts implemented from 22 September, following approvals in the 56th GST Council meeting on 3 September *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Tata bags 'multi-crore' GSTAT project

Tata Communications announced on Monday that it has secured a "multi-crore" contract from the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) to develop a comprehensive digital infrastructure. This move includes network, Internet of Things, cloud, and security solutions with integrated management across various domains. It is designed to enhance and streamline GSTAT's operations, facilitating seamless access across its 31 benches nationwide, strengthening data security, and improve user experience. *—PTI*

3-YEAR TERM

Govt appoints Shirish Chandra Murmu as RBI Deputy Governor

NEW DELHI/ MUMBAI, 29 SEPT

The government has appointed Shirish Chandra Murmu as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a three-year term.

Murmu would replace M Rajeshwar Rao, whose extended tenure is coming to an end on 8 October.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment for a period of three years from the date of joining the post on or after 9 October, sources said on Monday. Murmu is currently Executive Director at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), overseeing the Department of Supervision.

According to the RBI Act, 1934, the central bank should have four deputy governors -- two from within the ranks, one from the commercial banking sector, and an economist to head the monetary policy department.

It is worth noting that Rao was first appointed Deputy Governor in September 2020 for a period of three years and received a one-year extension in 2023, followed by another extension in 2024. Thus, Rao would complete a total of five years on 8 October.

Shirish Chandra **PHOTO: PTI**

RBI rate cut

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) began its three-day deliberations on Monday, with expectations largely favouring a status quo on the key repo rate, though some experts foresee a possible 25-basis-point cut.

The six-member rate-setting panel, headed by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, will announce its decision on Wednesday amid global uncertainties, including US-imposed 50 per cent tariffs on Indian exports.

The RBI had reduced the repo rate by 100 bps in three tranches this year but kept it unchanged in August, adopting a wait-and-watch approach. *—PTI*

JLR to partially resume operations

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) announced it will partially resume manufacturing operations in the coming days after a cyber attack halted production earlier this month. The firm is partnering with cybersecurity experts, UK government's NCSC, and law enforcement to ensure safe restart.

"As the controlled, phased restart of our operations continues, we are taking further steps towards our recovery and the return to manufacture of our world-class vehicles," a JLR spokesperson stated. They thanked everyone connected with JLR for "their continued patience, understanding and support," adding, "We know there is much more to do but the foundational work of our recovery is firmly underway."

Last week, JLR began its IT operations and is working to clear payments backlog. *—PTI*

Reliance Power to sell Biotruster Ltd for $12 million

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Reliance Power on Monday said it will sell 100 per cent stake in several Indonesian step-down subsidiaries to Singapore-based Biotruster Pte Ltd for around USD 12 million.

A share purchase agreement has been signed among Reliance Power Netherlands BV, Reliance Natural Resources (Singapore) Pte Ltd and Biotruster (Singapore) Pte Ltd to this effect.

Reliance Power will sell 100 per cent equity shareholding in PT Avaneesh Coal Resources, PT Heramba Coal Resources, PT Sumukha Coal Services, PT Brayan Bintang Tiga Energi, and PT Sriwijaya Bintang Tiga Energi, subject to certain conditions precedent and other customary terms and conditions, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Around $12 million will be received on the closure of the deal.

Reliance Power further noted that the buyer does not belong to the promoter/promoter group/group companies. *—PTI*

Anil Ambani **PHOTO: PTI**

100X RISE IN TRAFFIC

Can Zoho's new messenger app kill WhatsApp?

CHENNAI/NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Indian messaging app Arattai, developed by Zoho Corporation, has witnessed a dramatic surge in popularity, sparking discussions about whether it could become India's answer to WhatsApp.

According to Zoho founder and CEO Sridhar Vembu, daily new sign-ups skyrocketed from around 3,000 to over 3,50,000 in just three days, a 100-fold increase.

The name Arattai, meaning "casual chat" in Tamil, reflects its mission of simple, everyday communication. Launched quietly in 2021, the app has now emerged as a flagship platform for homegrown innovation. It supports text, image, video, and document sharing, along with voice and video calls, stories, and business channels.

Positioning itself as a privacy-focused, spyware-free alternative to global messaging giants, Arattai offers end-to-end encryption and emphasizes data sovereignty — aligning with India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

With a lightweight design and low-bandwidth optimization, the app is tailored for users with basic smartphones and limited internet access, a segment often underserved by data-heavy platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram.

Vembu stated the team is working on an emergency infrastructure upgrade to handle potential further surges. "That is how exponentials work," he remarked in a social media post.

- The name Arattai, meaning "casual chat" in Tamil, reflects its mission of simple, everyday communication.

Arattai's rapid rise highlights growing user interest in domestic digital platforms. If the momentum continues, Zoho's messaging app could become a formidable rival in India's communication landscape, especially among users seeking a reliable, privacy-focused, and accessible alternative. *—Agencies*

Lufthansa to cut 4,000 jobs amid AI boom

FRANKFURT, 29 SEPT

The Lufthansa Group announced on Monday its plan to shed 4,000 jobs by 2030, leveraging artificial intelligence and digitalisation to achieve greater efficiency. Most job losses are expected to occur in Germany, focusing primarily on administrative rather than operational roles.

In a statement, the airline group noted it aims to deepen the integration among its member airlines — Lufthansa, SWISS, Austrian Airlines, Brussels Airlines, and ITA Airways — and "is reviewing which activities will be no longer necessary in the future, for instance due to duplication of work."

PHOTO: PTI

Despite the job cuts, Lufthansa reported robust demand for air travel and predicts "significantly increased profitability" by end of decade.

The Lufthansa Group, a major player in global aviation, employed 101,709 staff in 2024 and generated revenues of 37.6 billion euros ($44 billion). The company remains optimistic despite the challenges posed by current supply chain constraints in the aviation industry. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Chhetri joins nat'l camp to prepare for Singapore match

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri and his two Bengaluru FC team-mates, Rahul Bheke and Roshan Singh Naorem, on Monday joined the national men's football team's preparatory camp in Bengaluru ahead of the upcoming AFC Asian Cup qualifier matches against Singapore. With the joining of the trio, the total number of players who have reported to the camp has risen to 28. Head coach Khalid Jamil had named 30 probables for the camp ahead of India's crucial Asian Cup qualifying round matches against Singapore on October 9 (away) and October 14 (home). But the camp began on September 20 with only 18 players, as 14, including Chhetri, were not released by three clubs.—*PTI*

Abhay Singh goes down fighting in Qatar Classic Squash

DUBAI, 29 SEPT

India's Abhay Singh went down in a five-game thriller to Egyptian World No. 15 Fares Dessouky in the round of 16 at the Qatar Classic squash event in Doha on Monday. World No. 35 Abhay, who stunned World No. 5 Karim Gawad of Egypt in the previous round, took the lead twice against Dessouky before the Egyptian clawed back to win 11-13, 11-5, 9-11, 11-3, 11-3 in 66 minutes. The win against Gawad was one of the highest points of the Indian squash player's career. He had outplayed the former world champion 11-6, 11-4, 1-11, 11-9. Earlier this year, in May, Abhay claimed his 11th PSA Tour title by winning the Hyder Trophy 2025. Abhay, 27, a multiple Asian Games medallist, will next play in a PSA Bronze event.—*PTI*

Yuvraj Sandhu finishes T-43 in Taiwan

TAIPEI CITY, 29 SEPT

Indian golfer Yuvraj Sandhu shot 2-over 74 to finish tied-43rd at the Mercuries Taiwan Masters as the majority of the players struggled on the final day, and under-par rounds were just a few. The Taiwan Golf and Country Club has proved a challenge all week as scoring has been difficult. Sandhu made four birdies, three bogeys, and one triple bogey in his final round of the week. The Indian made an early bogey on the third hole and followed it up immediately with a birdie on the fourth. He repeated the same cycle on the ninth and 10th holes before dropping three shots on the 12th hole.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Atiqa's impressive comeback earns podium

AL AIN, 29 SEPT

Young Indian racer Atiqa Mir tore through the field to secure a well-deserved podium in the final of the RMC Invitational karting event at Al Ain Raceway here. In qualifying, 10-year-old Atiqa was on course to finish on pole but had to settle for second place by just one tenth of a second due to traffic on her lap. Starting on the outside row is a disadvantage here, and due to that, the Akcel GP driver ended the heats in fourth place and in the pre-final, she got involved in an accident that pushed her back to eighth place. Starting from eighth on the grid for the final on Sunday, Atiqa put up a storming drive, passing five cars to finish third.—*PTI*

India Women eye title breakthrough at ICC ODI WC

PHOTO: PTI

GUWAHATI, 29 SEPT

With home advantage and current form on its side, the Indian women's cricket team will look to end a 47-year wait for its maiden ICC title when it takes the field at the ODI World Cup, starting with a clash against Sri Lanka here on Tuesday.

The global showpiece will feature eight top-ranked teams Australia, England, India, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan competing in 28 league matches in a round-robin format across four venues in India and one in Colombo for a record prize money of USD 13.88 million.

The Sri Lankan capital will host 11 round-robin matches, including Pakistan's seven league stage games and the marquee clash against India on 5 October.

One semifinal and the final are also scheduled there, should Pakistan go all the way.

On current form, India arrive with confidence, having recently beaten England in both ODI and T20I series.

They also ended a worrying losing streak against Australia in a recent tournament build-up series. The Indians nearly chased down 413 in the final ODI in New Delhi against the team, which is chasing a record-extending eighth title.

Exiled Afghan women cricketers arrive to watch World Cup

There is no Afghanistan team in the ICC Women's World Cup starting on Tuesday, but a group of 16 cricketers from that country now living in exile in Australia has arrived here to watch the showpiece on a special learning tour.

The group, currently refugees in Australia after being forced to flee their homeland when the Taliban took control in 2021, has been invited to watch the World Cup matches to help them in both their "cricketing and personal development journeys".

The move is aimed at ensuring that the Afghan women cricketers can continue their careers in exile and keep the sport alive for future generations. —*PTI*

BCCI to lodge protest as Naqvi takes away AC Trophy

India demands return of trophy, medals; says Naqvi can't take it his hotel

DUBAI, 29 SEPT

The BCCI has announced it will lodge a "very strong protest" at the upcoming ICC meeting in November against Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi, who walked away with the Asia Cup trophy after the Indian team refused to accept it from him. BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia backed the team's decision, stating, "India cannot accept the trophy from someone who is waging a war against the country." He added, "We have taken a decision not to accept the trophy but that does not allow the gentleman to take away the trophy and the medals to his hotel," he added.

Suryakumar Yadav, who led India to their ninth Asia Cup title, confirmed the team made the call on the ground itself. "No one told us to do this," he said.

"I think this is one thing which I have never seen since I started playing and following cricket that a champion team is denied a trophy. I mean that too a hard-earned one. It's not like it happened easily. It was a hard-earned tournament win," Suryakumar replied to a query from PTI on how it felt being denied the biggest prize after winning seven games at the continental showpiece.

Naqvi has yet to comment on the incident directly, but took a veiled dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's congratulatory post, which compared the win to Operation Sindoor. Naqvi called the analogy "against the spirit of the game."

Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha defended Naqvi's actions, saying, "If you won't take the trophy from the ACC president, how will you get it?" India's participation in the tournament had drawn criticism domestically, with opposition politicians ac-cusing the BCCI of placing revenue above national pride in light of the Pahalgam terror attack earlier this year.—*PTI*

Suriya Kumar Yadav Shaking Hand with Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who also happen to be ACC President and PCB Chairman *PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/PTI*

BCCI announces ₹ 21 crore prize money

The BCCI has declared that the Asia Cup-winning Indian cricket team and its support staff will be presented a prize money of Rs 21 crore for its unbeaten run in the just-concluded tournament.

The Board announced after the team defeated arch-rivals Pakistan by five wickets in the final of the tournament in Dubai on Sunday. "It was an extraordinary victory and therefore as a part of celebrations, BCCI has announced a cash award of Rs 21 crore in favour of the players and the support staff who are part of the Indian team in the Asia Cup," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia told PTI.

However, the body did not give details of the exact breakup of the fund.

"That money will be distributed, and this is a big reward for our team and the Indian cricket board, as well as the people of India. We are extremely proud of our cricketers and the support staff for their superb performance in Dubai," Saikia added. —*PTI*

INDIA TOUR OF AUSTRALIA

Kanika Siwach struck the lone goal as the Indian junior women's hockey team recorded a 1-0 victory *PHOTO: X/@NATIONALHOCKEY*

Indian jr women's hockey team beats Australia 1-0

CANBERRA, 29 SEPT

Kanika Siwach struck the lone goal as the Indian junior women's hockey team recorded a 1-0 victory over the Australia U21 side in its third match of the ongoing tour here on Monday.

Siwach scored the winning goal in the 32nd minute at the National Hockey Centre here.

After a goalless first half, India finally broke the deadlock courtesy of a fine field goal from Siwach in the opening minutes of the third quarter to claim the win.

India had lost two games on the trot against the Australia U21 side earlier, but with this win, the visitors will be hoping to ride on the newfound momentum in the remaining two matches of the tour.

India will next play two matches against Canberra Chill, a club playing in Australia's premier Hockey One League, on Tuesday and Thursday to conclude their Australia tour.

After a tough contest between the two sides in the first half, India finally broke the deadlock courtesy of a crucial field goal by Kanika Siwach in the opening minutes of the third quarter to claim the win for her side. India had lost two games on the trot against the Australia U21 side earlier, but with this win, the visitors will be hoping to ride on the newfound momentum and bounce back in the remaining matches of this tour.India will next play two matches against Canberra Chill, a club competing in Australia's premier Hockey One League, on September 30th and October 2nd to conclude their Australian tour, according to a press release from Hockey India. —*PTI*

Hooda beats Gurjar for F46 men's javelin throw gold

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Rinku Hooda upstaged world record holder compatriot Sundar Singh Gurjar as Indians finished 1-2 in the men's javelin throw F46 event on the third day of the World Para Athletics Championships here on Monday.

Rinku won his maiden World Championships title with a throw of 66.37m while Gurjar sent his spear to 64.76m to take the silver. Another Indian in the fray, Ajeet Singh, was fourth with 61.77m. Cuban Guillermo Varona Gonzalez was third with 63.34m.

F46 classification is for athletes with arm deficiency, impaired muscle power or impaired passive range of movement in arms, with athletes competing in a standing position.

After Rinku and Gurjar's 1-2 finish, India now have two gold, two silver and one bronze in the Championships.

India moved up to sixth spot in the medal table led by China (4 gold, 7 silver, 3 bronze). Brazil (4-7-2), Poland (4-0-4), Switzerland (3-0-1) and Netherlands (3-0-0) are at second, third, fourth and fifth spots respectively.

"This is my first competition in India. I had a good feeling on the ground. Today was my day, so everything was in my favour. What I did was a new experience for me," Rinku said after his triumph.

Born to a farming family at Dhamar village on the outskirts of Haryana's Rohtak, Rinku's left arm got stuck in a paddy-sowing machine while playing on his father's farmland when he was just three. He does not remember the incident but was told about that by his parents when he was eight. —*PTI*

ALCARAZ REACHES FINAL IN JAPAN

TOKYO, 29 SEPT

In Tokyo, top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz came from a set down to beat fourth-seeded Casper Ruud 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 in the semifinals of the Japan Open for his personal best 66th victory in a season.

"I had a lot of chances in the first set," Alcaraz said. "I had four break points, if I'm not wrong. It's just about details, so I just tried to be more positive than the first set." Wimbledon champion Iga Swiatek defeated Camila Osorio for her 400th career win and advanced to the fourth round at the China Open on Monday. —*PTI*

A 15-YEAR CAREER

England all-rounder Chris Woakes retires from Int'l cricket

LONDON, 29 SEPT

England all-rounder Chris Woakes on Monday announced his retirement from international cricket following his omission from the Ashes squad last week.

In his 15-year career as an England cricketer, Woakes, a pace-bowling all-rounder, played 62 Tests, scoring 2034 runs and taking 192 wickets.

The 36-year-old has also played 122 ODIs and 33 T20Is, making 1524 and 147 runs respectively. He has taken 204 wickets jointly in white ball formats. "The moment has come, and I've decided that the time is right for me to retire from international cricket," Woakes said.

Woakes' final Test appearance came against India at The Oval when he came out to bat with his arm in a sling, attempting futilely to prevent the visitors from etching a series-levelling win in the fifth Test.

"Playing for England was something I aspired to do since I was a kid dreaming in the back garden, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have lived out those dreams."Representing England, wearing the Three Lions and sharing the field with teammates over the last 15 years, many of whom have become lifelong friends, are things I'll look back on with the greatest pride," he said. Woakes was part of England's two ICC World Cup wins — the 2019 ODI World Cup at home and the T20 version in Australia in 2022. "Making my debut in 2011 in Australia seems like yesterday, but time flies when you're having fun. —*PTI*

Chris Woakes *PHOTO: PTI*

Ojasvi powers India to a sweep of air rifle medals

NEW DELHI, 29 SEPT

Ojasvi Thakur *PHOTO: PTI*

Ojasvi Thakur won the gold medal to lead India's all-podium finish in the 10m air rifle women's event at the ISSF Junior World Cup as Kondur and Shambhavi Kshirsagar secured silver and bronze, respectively, here on Monday.

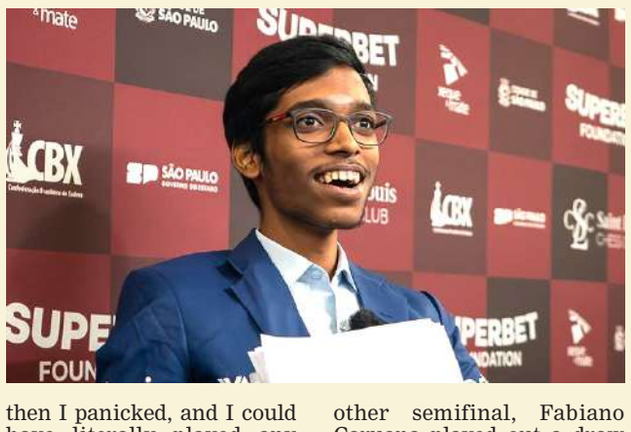
Ojasvi Thakur emerged as the champion with a score of 252.7, firing two brilliant 10.9s on her 8th and 16th shots to seal the gold. Hrudya Shri finished second with a score of 250.2, while qualification leader Shambhavi completed the all-India podium with 229.4 at Karni Singh Shooting Range.

The Indian trio had already stamped its authority in qualification, finishing as the top three with Shambhavi leading on 632.0, Ojasvi following with 631.9, and Hrudya third on 629.8. Croatia's Anamarija Turk, who had qualified eighth, was the closest challenger but placed fourth in the final with 206.6. —*PTI*

GRAND CHESS TOUR FINALS 2025

Pragg draws with Vachier-Lagrave

LONDON, 29 SEPT



Indian Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa escaped a late fumble to hold French GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave to a draw in their first semifinal game of the Grand Chess Tour Finals in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on Monday. Praggnanandhaa made a poor move with just one second left on the clock to lose his grip on the game, but was fortunate that Vachier-Lagrave failed to capitalise. "I don't know why I panicked here; there was just no reason to panic," Praggnanandhaa said. "When I was down to seven seconds or something, and then I panicked, and I could have literally played any other move and made an easier draw," he added.In the other semifinal, Fabiano Caruana played out a draw against Levon Aronian.

The tournament is being played in a single-elimination knockout format with mixed time controls. Each tie will consist of two classical games, two rapid games, and four blitz games. The first three finalists are veterans of the tour, with Vachier-Lagrave, Caruana, and Aronian all playing in the first GCT Tour Finals back in London in 2018, though GM Hikaru Nakamura took the title after beating Caruana and Vachier-Lagrave. A year later Vachier-Lagrave beat GM Magnus Carlsen in the Semifinals but lost to GM Ding Liren in the Final, while Aronian lost to both Ding and Carlsen. —*PTI*

Europe wins Ryder Cup, reasserts dominance over US

FARMINGDALE, 29 SEPT

Staked to the largest lead in history, Europe fully expected to win the Ryder Cup. The surprise was how much emotion poured out of the team on a final day that produced a furious American charge and, ultimately, another Irish hero.

What looked to be only a matter of time before the European celebration was on turned into nervous glances at the scorecard as the unruly crowd at Bethpage Black finally had a U.S. team to cheer for instead of against.

It went from looking impossible to improbable to just maybe.

And then Shane Lowry, who endured so much abuse from a hostile and vulgar New York crowd, had the last word. He holed a 6-foot birdie putt against Russell Henley to earn the half-point Europe needed to make sure it kept that 17-inch gold chalice.

He couldn't contain himself, pumping his fists and spinning around the green and squeezing every teammate he could find. He recalled telling his caddie as they walked up the 18th fairway, "I have a chance to do the coolest thing in my life here." —*PTI*